THE SATURDAY EVENING POST

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IN THE SWING.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY F. H. STAUFFER.

Swinging among the white maples,
Shut away from the sultry noon;
A picture to haunt the mem'ry
Framed in the rich summer bloom.

Two little feet of pearl whiteness
Are flutt'ring about in the air,
And two little eyes are twinkling,
In the amber mists of her hair!

A lupe that is blushing scarlet
In the clasp of a starry zone;
A mouth as red as a leopard's,
A voice low and sweet in its tone.

A shout and a peal of laughter,
A kiss thrown from a tiny hand,
As if on an outward-bound steamer
Veering away from the land!

Thus dreaming away her childhood—
A beautiful vision of bliss!
No thought for an hour in future,
Contented with little in this!

Dear me! is sets one a-thinking;
Good thoughts make one better, you know.
Half of us jog along dreaming
Upon the short journey below!

THE LITTLE FRIGHT.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY CORA PENTECOST.

CHAPTER I.

Wentworth Place looked somewhat gloomy, as enveloped in thick foliage, it stood beneath the frowning cliffs of the beautiful Blue Ridge.

The mountain breezes sighed and sung among the trembling aspens, while, in the distance, rushing over its rocky bed, murmured the rapid waters of the river James.

But as you neared the dwelling, the wide, clean walks, the nicely swept stone steps, birds singing in the trees; and above all one peep into the broad hall filled with modern furniture, gradually dispelled that sense of awe which ere now has crept into the mind. Upon a sofa, just within the front hall door, a robust, rather coarse-looking young man was lazily extended, vainly endeavoring to while away the weary hours.

As the goddess of sleep would not just then grant him one moment of perfect forgetfulness, with half-closed eyelids he watched the flies settle on the ceiling, or maliciously struck at the honey bee as she winged her way to the flowers.

His dull blue orbs seemed dreamily looking for some more important object upon which he could exert his indolent faculties, when suddenly one appeared in the shape of a young girl, scarcely twelve years of age. She came quickly and quietly from the opposite door, evidently wishing to gain the staircase undiscovered. Just as she had passed the sofa safely, and the unmistakable anxiety was leaving her face, life came suddenly back to the heavy frame of our young hero, and springing forward with newly inspired energy, he harshly called:

"Hold! Whither away so fast, my beauty?"

The child started, then ran without making any answer.

"Little Fright, come back here this very moment! Do you hear?" shouted Frank Wentworth, as he bounded by to take his stand upon the first step of the stairs; then, taunting man and passionate child stood face to face. The man continued:

"I say, you ugly runaway, when a fine young man takes the pains to call you by the prettiest name you ever had, I think the least you can do is to give him a civil answer. Now will you please to tell me where you are going?"

The girl's face turned scarlet as she angrily replied:

"Up to my garret, of course; where else could I be going?"

"Indeed;" lifting his bright eyebrows in a mischievous arch; "and where have you been?"

"Down in the kitchen."

"Very good. What did you go there for?"

"Because I wanted to!"

"Wanted to, ha? That's very singular! But would you be so kind as to inform me for what purpose you wished to go to the kitchen? Didn't you bring something up with you? Show me what you are holding so tightly under the folds of your beautiful robe?"

"It is an old candle if you must know," she screamed, as she drew a piece of poorly moulded tallow from behind her, indignantly thrusting it almost into his mouth.

"Ho, ho! stealing, are you?" cried the young tyrant, snatching the treasure roughly from the hand that held it. "I'd like to know what such a stupid thing as you wants with a light? When dark comes the best thing you can do is to mourn over your own hideousness; and in daylight I advise you to shun the paths of men. If you had any idea of how you looked you would creep into some corner, into which the eyes of mortal could never peep. Did you ever look into the glass?"

"No! and I never want to!" was the savage return.

"Three cheers for words of wisdom from a fright. Now I'll let you go, but I'll keep the candle just to teach you to treat your superiors like *white folks* the next time we meet."

Maud ran with the swiftness of despair to her attic, the only place on earth she could call her own. Falling on the narrow bed she wildly wept with rage and indignation. It was seldom this strange child shed tears. She was hardened by neglect, insult, and sneering contempt; but this was an unusual attack from a new quarter.

She rarely allowed herself to be seen in any part of the dwelling inhabited by the family. And when, in her rambles about the woods or garden, she did meet any civilised being, she heard the often repeated exclamation:—"What a fright." "How hideous!" "Only look at that queer creature! Is she crazy?" &c., &c., with composure, or with no visible effect, except to make her flee away. But she could never remember being so boldly interrupted in her path before, nor positively confronted by what Wentworth termed "*white folks.*"

Scorn she could endure as her natural element; but familiarity was a new foe in the desert road of life.

The passion of anguish having passed away, the lonely child laid the pallid cheek upon her small, thin hand, while the large, sad eyes gazed through the little window with an expression of yearning earnestness as if to read "what the starry heaven thought of the matter."

The sun was setting, but the gathering clouds, which betokened a rising storm, had darkened its lingering rays, and all the world seemed wrapped in that solemn hush which often heralds the fearful tempest when the heroine of our tale, putting her ear to the broken window pane, intently listened to the murmur of strange voices, together with the pawing of restless horses feet.

Yes! the Wentworth family, who lived in Richmond through the winter, had returned to spend the summer at their country house. Henceforth, for the next three months at least, she must carefully shun the haunts of civilized men, and keep herself more closely hidden in the dells and thickets of the surrounding country.

She crept softly out at the low, square door, groped her way through several dark rooms filled with rubbish, then down a narrow staircase till she came to a ruined part of the terrace at the back of the building. Going to the end of an extending beam, she caught hold of an overhanging bow, and swung off with the agility of a squirrel, she landed among the bushes below in safety; then darted through the tangled briars, and over the sharpest rocks, till the projecting mountain could shield her from the driving rain.

Taking her seat beneath one jutting rock, she leaned her head upon another to watch the conflicting elements.

The thunder rolled in tones of deep sublimity; the wind howled through the trembling crags with dismal yell, while the flashing lightning lit the scene with fearful beauty—and Maud's face shone with a radiance which seemed to say:

"I glory in God's mighty power."

When the storm had spent its fury, and great sheets of water were falling steadily, our stray child, aroused from the spell which had bound her, came from her lonely retreat for the purpose of seeking some shelter for the night, striving in the dark and rain to look about her, she soon found it was nonsense to attempt to change her situation just then; so raking some of the dryest leaves together for a resting place, she laid upon a bed but little harder than her pallet in the attic. Wearied with excited feeling, and lulled by the pattering rain, she soon fell asleep in this—one of nature's bed-rooms.

Maud was not in the habit of sleeping out of doors, although she often spent whole hours enjoying nature's freaks in day time from some rude shelter; or when the moon was shining, would wander far into the night among the forest-trees. It was broad daylight the next morning when she woke, and the expression of wild grief, succeeded by the beam of admiration which her face had worn the day before had faded. Silent and pale she slowly moved toward the house; entered the underground kitchen, and without speaking seated herself beside the huge fireplace, till Dina, with an emphatic—"take it," gave her some cornbread and bacon on a tin plate.

"Dina," said Maud, when she had finished her breakfast, "won't you give me another candle?"

"Whar's de one I gibed you yisterday?" sullenly questioned the old servant, turning her eyes sharply on the little girl.

"Frank Wentworth took it from me."

"Looky here, chile! if you go a runnin' into all de public places, and show dese white folks what favors I does for you I won't do you no more. Such ugly brats as you is a'nt worth taking such aweful scoldings for, no how. Nobody else likes or pets you but me, an' I a'nt sure as I ought to, needer."

The victim of this complaint made no response, but leaned against the door frame in an attitude of such utter hopelessness, that the heart of the old negro was touched.

"I clare I don't know what I'se going to do. I'se just like 'tween two fires. Here's Massa Frank blowing me up to de skies, cause I done gibed you de candle tother day. Still I clare I can't stand it to see you look so pale and miserable like. I reckon I'se got to gib you a piece ob mine dis time; but see here, gal, if you goes around dis stablishment, spreading de news, dis de lass candle your go'in to git from dis nigger, sure. Does you hear?"

"Yes."

"An' I'll tell you noder thing, too! You'd better not let de folks know how you sets up dar reading and making marks wid dat pencil ob yourn! Now do yer understand?"

"Yes," briefly answered Maud, as she eagerly possessed herself of the coveted gift, rolled it up in the folds of her dress, and made her way all speed to her garret, leaving Aunt Dina muttering to herself about "pale faces," and "cruel white folks," &c.

Mrs. Grifeth, a widow lady of great wealth and much refinement, had left her native city—Baltimore, to spend the summer months in a rural village among the mountains almost in sight of Wentworth Place.

Being something of a naturalist, and quite a skillful artist, she spent much time in climbing the rugged crags, or roaming through the grand old forests for which this spot of earth was noted.

During one of her longest rambles her attention was suddenly arrested by a quaint little figure some yards in the distance.

It was Maud. She sat upon a mossy bank, with one arm carelessly thrown across the drooping limb of an overhanging tree. Her body was bent forward, while her eyes seemed eagerly looking at the brightly rippling waters of a tiny stream. So intently was she gazing, she heard no sound of coming footsteps, and the lady stood beside her full three minutes ere she was aware of any human presence. A gust of wind blew the widow's scarf aside, so it was reflected in the creek. Seeing this the maiden started, and sent a keen, shy glance toward the stranger; then springing quickly to her feet she would have darted off had not her new admirer caught the hem of the tattered dress, saying as she did so, in a very gentle voice:

"My child, don't run away! I wish to talk with you."

Maud paused, then slowly raised her wondering eyes to the speaker's face.

The artiste placed her hand upon the dark masses of tangled hair and asked:

"Where were you going, little one?"

The child hesitated and her head drooped, while she fumbled nervously with the old cord which was loosely tied around her waist. At last she stammered:

"I don't know—anywhere—nowhere."

"Where's your home, my love?"

Again her head was raised, but her countenance looked greatly puzzled as she repeated:

"Home? I haven't any."

"No home? Where do you live, then?"

"Here in these woods, all day. At night I sleep in the top of that big house; and when I get hungry I go to Dina's kitchen."

The lady smiled as still she questioned:

"What's your name?"

"Maud!"

"Maud what?"

"I don't know."

"Who's your mother?"

"I never heard."

"And, pray, how do you know your name is Maud?"

"Aunt Dina told me so."

"Who is Aunt Dina?"

"The old black woman that gives me meat and bread!"

"And how on earth did this old woman learn your name?"

"She won't tell me."

Mrs. Grifeth thought within herself, "Well, really! this is the queerest little creature I ever met."

Again she asked aloud:

"Maud, what were you looking at so earnestly in the stream just now?"

A faint color stole into the thin cheek, as she responded with great candor:

"At myself!"

"What did you think of yourself, my dear?"

"I thought—I thought—it is no wonder they call me 'Fright.' I am so ugly."

"Who calls you Fright?"

"Everybody."

"And do you really think you are so ugly?"

"Oh, yes, madam! Very, very ugly.'

The wild spirit of the child had fled; she sank upon her mossy seat with an air of piteous listlessness; yet there was an exquisite grace about the movement which charmed the stranger.

Mrs. Grifeth sat down beside her, and drew the now submissive head upon her shoulder, took both the tiny hands in hers, and kindly spoke.

"My dear, you are not homely! All who say so are mistaken."

At this, the small head again was raised, the flashing eye, in inquiry, once more was lifted to the speaker's face; and a perplexed expression shadowed the childish countenance. The sympathising woman smiled, as smoothing the matted hair from the broad, though sunburnt forehead, said:

"See! This hair, when brushed and curled, will be very beautiful; and, little one, your eyes are the prettiest I ever saw. Besides, there can exist a beauty which far exceeds mere physical perfection. When the heart is pure and mind is cultivated, there must be something very pleasant mirrored in the face. Can you read, little girl?"

"Yes; but not very well."

"Who taught you?"

"The young ladies at the house, who once spent the winter here. A gentleman they called 'The Tutor' stayed here too, and used to give them lessons every day. At first he was very cross to me, but when I offered to black his boots and light his fire, he said he would teach me sometimes when school was out. I learned to read, write, and cipher; and—and he used to correct my language also."

"Is that all you learned? Were you not going to tell me something else?"

Maud looked troubled, as she slowly made reply:

"Yes, I was; but as I only took four lessons, on days when the young ladies were not here, I did not learn much, though I liked it most of all."

"Well, what was it? I am waiting to hear," gently urged the anxious listener.

"Drawing."

"Ah? I thought perhaps it was. I draw, too; and if you would like to see some of my pictures, I'll bring them here to-morrow, upon one condition—that is, that you bring yours for *me* to look at. Perhaps I can instruct you."

The impulsive girl caught the hand which still rested on her head, and pressed it passionately to her lips, exclaiming,

"Dear, kind, good lady, how can I ever thank you?"

"By meeting me in this very place two hours earlier than this to-morrow afternoon. It's almost five o'clock now, and I must reach the village before night sets in. So good-bye, Waifie."

She stooped to kiss the unturned forehead, and had started on her way, when a timid touch caused her to look round again. There she saw the wistful face of our little heroine, heard in plaintive tones:

"Please do not fail to come."

The wild and weird-like face of a neglected girl haunted the widow's dreams that night; and as for Maud, her heart beat high with wild excitement. Her large eyes watched the stars till almost morn; for an inward whisper told her that another era in her life was dawning.

The next day her hair was smoothed and hung in shining curls upon her shoulders; the rents were drawn together in her dress, and clumsy shoes were tied upon the feet which yesterday was bare. She was waiting full half an hour, at the spot appointed, before her friend arrived. Warm and bright was the welcome she gave; then with evident reluctance, she handed an old copy-book toward her patron, saying, as she did so:

"I am ashamed to show them; but I promised."

"That's quite right," the lady answered, with a pleasant smile. Then the two sat side by side, while the artiste scanned with critic's eye the crude attempts of her protege.

Rude and rough enough they were. Quite desultory and unfinished; some profiles, some figures, some scattered outlines of rural landscapes, taken, as she said, from memory of pictures seen in the school-room portfolio. Many and great as were the faults in those productions—the general arrangement, the evident design, and some bold strokes, spoke of genius in the hand which wrought them.

The connoisseur rolled up the book, and put it in her pocket, observing quietly:

"Maud, you will be an artiste some day."

"Do you really think I can learn?" eagerly asked the earnest voice.

"To be sure you can. Now look at mine!"

As sketch after sketch was placed before her, and the musical voice of her new friend explained the various scenes they represented, the young face glowed with rare enthusiasm, while the flashing fire of the brilliant eye showed plainly, that thought not cultivated, her appreciation of the beautiful in art was extraordinary.

"Maud, would you like to visit all these places?"

"I, travel all around this great world! Oh, madam—" The thought seemed too overwhelming to her. She paused for want of language.

"Yes, you! I have been, and why not you?"

"You forget," she answered, sadly, "I have no money."

"But I have plenty. If you will be my daughter, I'll go round the world again, and take you with me."

Without noting the convulsive clasping of the tiny hands, or the pleading look of joyful surprise already written on the sharp features, the speaker still continued:

"I have no little girl, and if you'd like to be my child, I think I can persuade Old Dina to give you up. You don't do much to help her, do you?"

"Oh, no, no! nothing! not one single thing for anybody. I'm useless here; and if you were to carry me away this very day, I never should be missed."

The girl had risen to her feet.

One arm outstretched with a sweeping gesture, her whole attitude adding to the fiery emphasis she threw into her words. The lady smiled, and said:

"Well, Maud, I will not play the gipey now, and take you off by stealth. See those heavy clouds! A thunder storm is just upon us. I expect I'll have to spend the night at Wentworth Place. Come, let's walk on toward the house. Do you think they'll take me in?"

"Oh, yes, of course they will, but I cannot go!"

"Why?"

"Oh, dear! They do laugh and make such fun, and scold me, too! I can bear it when alone, but I should not like to have you hear it!"

"I should not like to hear it either, my dear child; so I'll tell you what we'll do. I don't approve the least deception in the usual way, but in this emergency a little may be pardoned. Now you go on to get your supper, after which you must hide yourself in some corner of the hall till I go to my bed-room for the night. Watch which chamber I am taken to, then come, and I will let you in."

"That's the very plan!" exclaimed the child. And as now they neared the mansion, the nimble feet soon carried the odd but graceful figure behind the shrubbery, out of sight.

Again the tempest raged about the mountain crags; but strange to say, Maud seemed to have lost her interest in the stormy elements.

At an early hour Mrs. Grifeth was shown to her apartment.

As she passed along the hall, her curious eye detected something more substantial than a shadow crouched beneath the staircase, and a few minutes after, she had closed her chamber door, a gentle tap invited her to open it again.

"Have you asked them? Am I going?" was the child's first eager question.

"I have not said a word about it yet, my dear. I preferred studying the character of these people a little while before asking for my treasure. Time enough yet. To-morrow morning I'll broach the subject, and doubt not that four-and-twenty hours from this time, I can call you my own little daughter! Now, tell me, Maud, have you no clue whatever to your parentage? Does not any one know where you came from?"

"Yes; Dina knows something about me, but she will not tell. She says she has a pretty box that will explain all things, but I cannot have it till I am twelve years old, and that will not be for a whole month yet." But she added, half uneasily, "We need not wait for that, need we? I don't care where I came from, if you will only take me for your child."

"No, indeed! that need not bind us a day! I shall take you anyway. But you must know I have a deal of curiosity, and should like right well to discover how you came by those bright eyes of yours. Come now, my love; creep into this bed with me. I like to sleep with a little girl."

Soon the orphan's head was pillowed upon the bosom of affection, and wearied from the sleepless night before, this first love that she had ever known was so soothing, scarce a moment passed ere she was breathing easily in healthful slumber.

CHAPTER II.

The following morning, at breakfast, Mrs. Grifeth thought it time to speak of the subject she had so much at heart, and so improved the first pause in conversation by observing:

"Mrs. Wentworth, I have taken quite a fancy to one of the *attachés* of your establishment."

"Indeed!" answered the hostess, smiling in her blandest manner. "I am most happy if my premises afford you any object of interest. We have quite a nice set of servants. But I suppose the one to whom you refer must be Julia's maid. She is such a neat, stylish-looking girl. Every one takes a fancy to her."

"No. I do not think the one to whom I allude is a regular servant in any department. In fact, I come to you for information on that point; for I confess, from her own statement, I can make out very little about her."

"Ah! who can it be?" and every one at table looked toward their guest as if echoing the question—"who can it be?"

"She says her name is Maud," continued the lady; "but more than that I cannot ascertain. She seemed to have but an indistinct idea herself, of the position she holds. I found her in the wood the other day, and her wild artlessness attracted me so much, that if she is not indispensable to your family, I should very much like to make some arrangement with you that will allow me to carry her home with me."

"Ha! ha!" rather rudely laughed Miss Lily, a young lady scarcely older than our heroine. "She must mean 'The Fright,' that ugly little wild-cat that has been running about these woods ever since I can remember, and before, too."

Just here the stately Miss Julia wisely remarked:

"Mother, you really ought to make that little vagabond keep herself more in the background! She is always peering and peeping at every new comer. I dare say she has been using some of her savage impudence toward our visitor."

"Indeed, I hope not," exclaimed the mother, with great apparent concern. "I hope, Mrs. Grifeth, if any one has treated you in the least rudely, you will not hesitate to tell me, that I may have the transgressor punished.

Mrs. Grifeth's countenance expressed the perplexity she felt at her meaning being thus sin-

gularly misconstrued; so she endeavored to explain more clearly.

"You mistake; this little girl has not been guilty of anything in my presence for which she should be punished. I speak not ironically, but in earnest, when I say I have become strangely interested in this child, and would come to almost any terms for the privilege of taking her as my own."

Silenced by the serious, gentle tone of these words, it became the young ladies turn to look at each other in surprise, while the mistress of the house replied in somewhat an embarrassed manner,

"Well, really! I hardly know what to say; I don't know much about the person of whom you speak, and as far as I am concerned, you are welcome to her. I don't suppose she is of much use here. But if you are short of servants, perhaps, in time, you can train her to be a help to you."

A bright color mounted instantly to Mrs. Grifeth's face, but she maintained her composure, as she answered quietly:

"I do not wish her for a servant, but as a daughter. I have no daughter, and this lonely being seems to have no one to care much for her; so I should like above all things to adopt her as my own."

"I cannot tell you how much I am surprised," returned the hostess. "Either you or I must be laboring under some very great delusion. It is true, as I said before, I have seen very little of this poor stray child; but from what my children have told me now and then, I imagined her to be a most stupid, sullen, disagreeable piece of humanity. And, madam, although I should like beyond all things to do you any favor, I must advise you to learn more of her disposition and origin before you insist on lifting her from the dregs of poverty to the high position I should suppose a daughter of yours must hold."

"And I greatly fear," rejoined the benevolent woman, turning to the daughters, "that these young ladies have been sadly mistaken in the character of my ward! I have seen enough of her to feel sure she has not only a good intellect, but a mind remarkably susceptible of culture and refinement! So impressed with this idea am I, that I look fondly forward to the time when she shall enter the world as one of the leading stars of its best society."

The ladies blushed deeply at this gentle rebuke. Feeling half conscious that she had exaggerated even her own false impressions, Miss Julia thus endeavored to excuse herself—

"Well, we could only judge from appearances. I am sure, when any civilized person went near her, she fled as though she was bitten; and if we ventured to address a word to her, she was always so morose and savage, it was impossible to form a favorable opinion of her disposition. I am certain she is the ugliest being *I* ever beheld."

Just here, affected Miss Lily chimed in:

"How you ever expect to make a lady of her, is a mystery to me." Tossing her curly head with the air of a grown-up flirt.

"Well, now," said lazy, good-natured Frank, as having swallowed his last hot biscuit, he leaned easily back in his chair, stretched his limbs far under the table, and folded his hands above his head with a composure that showed his entire satisfaction as to the result of what he was about to observe: "Let me tell Mrs. Grifeth exactly how it is, and I believe she will think none the less of us for it. The fact is, some time ago—the dear knows how long—a servant came up-stairs with the tale of 'A baby found on the steps of Dina's cabin.' I remember all the children ran down, while yet half dressed to see it. While we were admiring and wondering where it came from, my father entered the kitchen; pitied the poor little thing, and told Dina to see that the nurse took good care of it, along with Lily. And everything necessary for her comfort should be provided. So it was, I reckon, during his life. But soon the novelty of a baby in the house, wore off. I forgot to go and see it any more; and so, I guess, did all the rest.

"In a few years father died; and when the babies got a little larger, Lily was given into the hands of a French governess, and nobody knows what became of this Maud. She naturally, I suppose, fell to Dina's care—which is no care at all. From that time we only spent the summer here; and through these warm months mother's health is always poor. Besides, she has had her calls to the village; her naps in the afternoon; and her rides in the evening to attend to—say nothing of plan and preparations to make for the following season—till I don't suppose she has thought of Little Fright from that day to this, except as one of the negroes.

"Julia naturally likes to make every one feel their deficiencies as much as possible, so I presume, in lieu of a better subject, has exercised her talent most unmercifully, toward the outcast. Why Lily improves her opportunities so well in this direction, I cannot exactly tell, unless it be because she loves to torment every one, or else"—he added, with a sly, arched glance at Lily—"she feared that if seen too much about the house, some one would come, and, just as you have done, take a fancy to her and make of her a prettier, smarter girl than herself.

"Now for your humble servant—for I'm no better than the balance of them—I can't often get to see her without hunting for her, and that's too much trouble. But when I can meet her, I dearly love to tease her; she gets in such a rage.

"The other day she came close to me in the hall. The temptation was too great to be resisted; so I jumped at her like a tiger, and gave her a good scolding; just because I had nothing else to do. She did not deserve it at all; and since then I have had several qualms of conscience, that made me think seriously of speaking to ma about her some of these days. But I'm glad you've stepped in before me. Now I think the best recompense we can make for our conduct, is to give her at once to you, who will do for her what we should have done long ago. Don't you agree with me, mother?"

"Yes, my son, I will gladly give the little creature to any one who will be kind enough to take care of her. But," added she, turning again toward her guest, while a slight flush mantled her fair cheek; "I should not like the world to know of the unintentional neglect this girl has been the subject of. Indeed it was utter thoughtlessness on my part. I have always been so much engaged with my various duties in society, I have never given much attention to my own children; leaving them principally to the care of nurses and governesses till they were ready to be introduced into the world; and it cannot be wondered at, if I did forget the existence of a foundling who took such pains to hide herself from my presence. But you know some folks have queer ideas of such things, and it might do me harm were it talked of. And really I never dreamed of what I was doing, or rather, what I was not doing. It was sheer carelessness I can assure you."

A slight shade of pity and contempt was visible upon the face of Mrs. Grifeth, as she answered—

"I find no difficulty in believing all you say, Mrs. Wentworth. And as you give me liberty to better the condition of the helpless one, I shall take no particular pleasure in exposing your conduct to the world." With a slight softening in her voice, she continued: "These, your children too—in view of their youth and inexperience, I will endeavor to forgive; hoping they may never feel the mortification which they have so thoughtlessly caused my protege to suffer."

The guilty maids reddened with anger and chagrin—to which, however, they gave no full expression till after their mild accuser had left the room.

With permission from the mistress of the mansion, the widow carried some breakfast upon her own plate for the maiden yet within her chamber. It did not require much calling to arouse the sleeper; she sprang from her bed in a moment, and prepared her simple toilet with incredible speed, listening the while, with flushing cheek and dancing eye, to the arrangement made for her immediate departure.

After partaking sparingly of the food prepared, the child placed her hand, all trembling from excitement, within the gentle clasp of her protector, and together they proceeded to the kitchen.

Dina dropped her dishcloth and stared in mute surprise to behold her ragged little charge in such intimate relation with so grand a lady.

Mrs. Grifeth soon made known her mission. She told how she had fallen in love with little Maud, and was going to take her home with her.

Then asked old Dina as a favor, to give her the mysterious box she had heard of, and reveal to her moreover, all she knew concerning the foundling.

During this explanation the family servant stood swaying herself uneasily from side to side, nervously shoving the pans or pulling the kettles about upon the table, casting furtive glances the while from the speaker to her work, from the ceiling to the floor, and in fact all around her small domain, evidently undetermined what to do. At last she mustered resolution, threw her head back with great dignity, and said, with emphasis—

"No, mistis, can't do it. I'se paid for keeping de secret, an' I'se ago'en to keep it up to de bery last day sot—so help me de Lord."

"Paid for it, are you, auntie?" asked the lady; at the same time drawing from her pocket a long silk purse well filled with shining coin, and holding it in close contact with the avaricious woman's eyes! "How much are you paid?"

"De Lord bress my soul, mistis. Why not so bery much; 'bout twelve dollar ebery month. But you know we poor colored folks hes to do de best we can to get along."

"I suppose you have not received wages for the coming month?"

"No, marm; it only comes at de end ob de month! If I had de money, I dun know as I'de be so particler 'bout tellin' of you; but you member, marm, it a'nt bery easy fer us poor creaters to get along no how; an' twelve dollars is not to be throwed to de dogs. He keeps awatching me like a hawk; an' if I didn't hab de chile, he wouldn't gib me noffin to save my life."

"Well, now, Aunt Dina, I know it is not wrong for you to do it; so if you'll tell me all you know of this little girl, I'll give you *one hundred dollars*, in this gold; that will be almost as much as you have gotten for the last year. All in one pile."

"Yes, em," grinned the greedy listener, as her black eyes shining with wondrous lustre, and her white teeth showing from ear to ear, she pushed a broken chair toward the lady, handed Maud a stool minus one leg, and seated herself upon her dirty bench preparatory to the commencement of her tale.

Well, the tale was told in her own roundabout manner and peculiar accent; which reduced to plain English, is simply this: About twelve years before, Dina had been awakened early in the morning by the cry of a young babe. Opening her door she found the child cradled in a basket. At the same time a neat black girl stepping forward, handed Dina a roll of money, and a beautiful little casket made of ebony, inlaid with pearls. She said her master had offered her a comfortable living if she would do as he directed, viz., first: to steal a babe from its mother, bring it to Dina's door as she had done, give her twelve dollars as a bribe, with the promise that if she would introduce the child into the family; have it taken care of through its infancy, and see that it had the necessaries of life for the twelve following years, she should receive through the hand of this same woman an equal portion at the end of every month. When the time appointed had expired she was to deliver to the girl this casket, which would disclose her parentage.

The accomplices had held out well. Dina kept the secret; and the neat black girl crept once a month stealthily to the under-ground kitchen; saw the child was safe; deposited the wages in the grasping palm of the cook of this country-seat, then departed to report that all was right.

So things had gone till now with her worldly goods, thus gloriously augmented, the aged slave thought it no harm to reveal the truth, even thus beforehand—"For," she muttered to herself "by de time de month comes round I'll habe de money in my pocket, an' be off for de happy land ob Canaan whar de free folks lib."

Mrs. Grifeth had the casket, and still holding her protegé tightly by the hand, she hastened to the chamber she had occupied the night before.

"The casket! what would it reveal?"

With trembling hand she tried the key. Time's own hand had rusted it; it would not turn. She covered her face with her hands, just one moment, to gain composure—when Maud, throwing her arms around the lady's waist, exclaimed with wild vehemence:

"Oh! don't open it! Pray, don't open it! Let me throw it out of the window; burn it in the fire; anything. Only, please, don't open it."

"*Maud!*" said the widow, lifting her now tranquil face; "we must open it! Only think, my darling, if this should tell us that you are my own, real daughter! Would not that be happiness unspeakable?"

"Your *own daughter!*"

The great eyes flashed with wonder and delight as she spoke.

"Did you, then, have a daughter once, and did you love her?"

The listener nodded; but before she could explain, another burst of feeling seized our heroine, and again she sobbed:

"But what if you ain't my mother, and I have to go to some cruel woman who will scold me, and call me ugly? I won't mind her! I'll hate her! I'll run away from her!" cried the passionate child.

"My Maud! My sweet little daughter," said Mrs. Grifeth sadly, laying her hand upon the finely moulded head. "Is this the way you are going to show your gratitude to God for giving you a mother? You grieve me, dearest! Does not something tell you that the benevolent Being who has allowed us these last hours of happiness will provide for its continuance if we will only trust Him?"

"Oh! forgive me! forgive me!" exclaimed the weeping penitent, sinking on the floor in an attitude of utter humiliation. "I am so naughty! I am not worth loving! Don't love me any more! Scold me, and make me good."

Mrs. Grifeth did not answer, but kindly stroked the cheek with her hand till in subdued and quivering voice, she meekly said:

"Open it, please."

The rusty key was oiled; again tried in the lock—and turned!

There lay the tiny necklace, the same the baby wore that evening on which it disappeared. Also a locket, holding a family group: the father, mother, and only child, an infant but a few weeks' old.

"Oh! Maud, you are indeed my own," the happy woman murmured, as she clasped her new-found daughter to her heart. Thus these two kindred spirits sat locked in close embrace. Enjoying in silence, for a few brief moments, this suddenly-revealed truth, which seemed too blissful to find expression.

It was no dream, no fancy—for here is proof. At length the mother spoke:

"See your name, my daughter!"

The girl looked up, and saw the words: "Maud Grifeth" engraved upon the golden clasp of the necklace.

"Now," continued the mother, "let us see what further revelations have been made. Ah! here is a note, addressed to Miss Maud Grifeth. Let us read it.

"Young lady: You are the daughter of Mrs. Mary Grifeth, formerly Miss Mary Belmont, daughter of Rev. James T. Belmont, an Episcopalian clergyman of Baltimore. Two years before your birth, she wedded a young aristocrat, by the name of Thornton Grifeth. As he is wealthy, comes of a long-lived stock, and moreover as firmly established (as what the world calls) a rising lawyer, in all probability you will No. —, ——— street, of the city in which you find him living in the same stone-front mansion, first saw the light. When you see your mother, please hand the note accompanying this."

They read the other:

"Proud woman: Do you remember the man who, years ago, knelt before you as a suitor? Who besought your favor as a poor dog would beg for a morsel from his master's table? You scorned my hand because I was the son of a mechanic, and could not read Latin and Greek like your father. I offered you money and lands, with a heart full of love; but that would not do. Your haughty spirit spurned me still. Soon after, a coxcomb of your own circle led you to the altar! Then my worshipping love was turned to hatred, and I vowed vengeance. Two years I waited. At last the opportunity came! The babe you doted on was left in the hands of an avaricious nurse. I, through an agent, tempted her with gold, and gained my end.

"Hoping that time and trouble may have softened your stony heart, I give your daughter back to you with a piece of sage advice: Teach her never to be so fastidious.

"You need not fear me longer. I know ere this I shall have seen you suffer. My hunger for revenge is satisfied. R. Bluff."

"Is this true, mother?"

"Yes, my child, nearly all. I remember the man well. He did try to be my lover. I was rather haughty in my young days, and somewhat proud of gentle blood. However, I did not reject his suit so much on account of his being the son of a mechanic, but because he was wanting in those refined tastes to which I had been accustomed, and had too small a sense of moral obligation. It is true he had money, which bought him a position in society, but I had reason to suspect his wealth was gained in a dishonorable way. I should always have felt myself lowered as the wife of a man possessing his cast of mind and general character, even if I could have conceived any affection for him, which, however, was impossible. I never shall forget the glance of fierce hatred he flashed upon me as he took the awful vow to be revenged before he died. It haunted me for weeks, but gradually wore off, or visited me only at times as a dark shadow.

"After my happy marriage with your father, it left me altogether; and strange to say, when you were taken from me, I never thought of this vow of vengeance.

"Through these long years I have blamed myself alone for all my misery. It was the first time I had ever left you. That night I yielded to the entreaties of your father, to go with him to see a fine opera troupe then in town. When we returned, the house was in great commotion, and to my horror you were gone. The nurse-girl wrung her hands in anguish, as she repeatedly assured us she left you in your cradle sleeping; was not absent more than ten minutes. When she came again, you had disappeared. More than this our life-long efforts were never able to discover. Maud! this guilty man has already reaped the fruit of his great wickedness! Only last week I heard that a fearful accident had taken his only children, three lovely daughters, suddenly away from earth; and I fear still greater retribution is awaiting him at the Judgment Seat of God. In view of all this, my child, even at this moment, while in full realization of this blissful reunion, we can, with grateful hearts, forgive and pray for this poor, deluded enemy—can we not?"

"Oh! yes, mamma, I can forgive every one, love every one, now! I am so happy! It is so sweet to know you are my own dear mother."

At that moment a servant came to the door to say that Mrs. Wentworth would be most happy to have her driver take the lady, with the little girl, to the village in the carriage.

Mrs. Grifeth was a Christian, and could forgive those who sinned against her, even as she hoped to be forgiven; but something of her old pride arose in her soul at the thought of receiving any favor from a family by which the idol of her life had been so cruelly neglected. She, therefore, politely declined the offer of the carriage, saying: "The morning was beautiful, and as the water must already have run from the rocky road, she would prefer to walk."

In courtesy, the happy mother bid a last farewell to the lady of Wentworth Place. But little Maud was less ceremonious. Escaping through a side door, to avoid as far as possible all that could remind her of her passed dark life, she crept beneath the shrubbery to await the coming of her new-found parent.

During their walk toward the village, the woodland maiden gambolled like some sylvan fawn about the road.

Now and then, as in her graceful sport, she neared the thankful widow, a ray of sparkling joy made the blissful face more radiant with the light of a pure and sacred love, while with scarcely parted lips, she murmured,

"Mother, sweet mother!"

Eight years has passed away.

It is the 1st of December, and Maud's birthday. She graduated six months ago, and to-night she makes her *début* into fashionable life. As darkness throws her sable mantle over the wintry earth, the snow-flakes which have fallen rapidly since morning, fall faster still. Bank and business-house are closed. Great coats are buttoned to the throat, hands thrust hastily into fleece-lined pockets, and heads are bowed in self-defence against the whistling wind, as men are rushing blindly homeward through the city streets. The little beggar sinks shivering upon the icy curbstone; the poor seamstress snuffs her tallow candle, shudders, and throws the last lump of coal into the cooling grate; while the wealthy men prepare themselves for great enjoyment.

Mrs. Grifeth's splendid mansion was brightly lighted. At the farther end of the elegant saloon, close to a glowing fire, stands our heroine.

The dark, gipsy child has grown to womanhood in wondrous beauty.

The well-developed form is decked in a robe of white, cut-velvet; jewels sparkle in the midnight hair; while costly, crimson trimmings set in pure relief the snowy dress, the bright and ever-changing face. Beside her stands a gentleman. It is her betrothed. Three months ago their vows were plighted; next spring they will be married, and together start upon their European tour.

The lover takes her hand, and fondly looking at the speaking face, in a voice rich with tenderness, he says:

"Dear Maud, to-night your beauty is resplendent. Your loveliness, wisdom, and true worth binds my heart as with a magic spell. But, dearest!" he added, with just a little mischief in his voice, "if I could only persuade you to be a little vain of *your perfections* I should not be obliged to compliment you so continually myself."

She looks up into his face and sweetly smiles. Placing her left arm lovingly about the doting mother, who just then approached, she answered:

"Even if I could in conscience eulogize myself, I'd leave all to yours, mother. Your praises fall more delightfully upon my ear than those of all the world besides." Her countenance grew serious suddenly as she continued: "I never could be vain, for a voice would always whisper, 'Once you were the "The Little Fright" of Wentworth Place.'"

The widow spoke:

"Always be thus grateful and humble, my daughter, that you may still be blessed of God."

The door-bell rang then, and the sad expression gave place to one of dancing delight and merry gladness, as she, still leaning on her lover's arm, went forward to receive her guests.

The mother fondly watched the handsome couple, while with a sigh of happiness she murmured:

"God has greatly blessed me in my children."

SATURDAY EVENING POST.

PHILADELPHIA, SATURDAY, DEC'B 9, 1865.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

(To G. G W. L.—If you send us the articles you propose, we will examine them.)

Respectfully declined.—"Breathings of the Soul." "Memory." "Life." "To Laura." "A Story of the Times."

A NEW STORY

BY

EMERSON BENNETT.

We have the pleasure of announcing to our readers that we have made an engagement with that well-known and very popular author, Emerson Bennett, to write, after the expiration of a short period, *exclusively for the Saturday Evening Post.*

Mr. Bennett designs commencing with the first paper of the new year, a story which will run through from about twelve to fifteen numbers of The Post. It will be called

THE PHANTOM OF THE FOREST;

A TALE OF THE BACKWOODS.

Our readers may look for a story of wild adventure and thrilling interest; but the public is so well acquainted with the peculiar merits of Mr. Bennett as a writer of fiction, that the simple announcement of a story from him is probably all that is necessary.

"ACROSS THE CONTINENT."

We had the pleasure of listening, on Monday evening, to the Honorable Schuyler Colfax, in his lecture upon his recent trip "Across the continent." As we expected, a large and intelligent audience filled the Academy of Music, and received, in evident delight, the vivid and graphic description with which the honorable Speaker charmed us for two hours. His facts were absorbingly interesting; his oratory at once dignified, genial, and witty. Few persons speak with such perfect distinctness when speaking so rapidly as is Mr. Colfax's habit; but it is not difficult to follow him, and his voice appeared to reach to the farthest limits of the building without any labored effort to be heard.

Starting from Atchison, Ka., he took us overland to California, pausing by the way to relate all that he saw in various places—the progress of civilization, the wealth and peculiar productions of the country, and the number of the inhabitants in those wonderful cities which have sprung like magic from the wilds of the great Western Lands. In closing, he gave us some very interesting information concerning the Mormons, and strongly expressed his desire to see the citizens of the United States living according to its laws—that is, in other words—to see the terrible custom of polygamy abolished, and no longer tolerated.

Finally, advocating the Pacific Railroad as a military necessity, he retired amid repeated rounds of applause, leaving a most pleasant impression upon the minds of all who heard him.

HOME.

Somebody has said that "a lighted lamp is a very small thing, and it burns calmly and without noise, yet it giveth light to all who are within the house," and so there is a sweetly pervading influence, which like the flame of a scented lamp, fills many a home with light and fragrance. Such an influence has been beautifully compared to a carpet, soft, deep, beautiful, giving such a cheerful look, and smothering many a discordant sound; or like a curtain, warding off summer's heat and winter's cold. It is the pillow on which sickness lays its head, and forgets half its misery. The silent influence of a sweet-browed, human angel, the soft-toned melody of a voice winning to deeds of love and kindness; the hand-clasp, soft, tender, refreshing as the dew, invigorating as the sunbeams; the fertilizing shower, shining on all with the mild lustre of moonlight, and harmonizing, in one soft tint, many of the discordant elements in a family.

What a Paradise such a home! With love, faith, hope, charity, twined above the portal. In such a home there are no angry voices, passionate cries, impious imprecations, and cruel threats. It is enough to make the angels weep, to see the want of such an influence in some homes. We happened, not long since, to accept an invitation, given by a most estimable woman, to spend the day with her. Her house was beautiful, the decorations and furniture in keeping with good taste, while a charming daughter of seventeen greeted us so sweetly. I was charmed, and thought in my heart that my friend was the happiest of women. Hours passed. We had lively conversation, music, mirth. Dinner came. A dispute arose at the table between mother and daughter; it was about a trifle, really of no consequence at all; and without intending to do so, we looked a reproof to the daughter, that for the time effectually restrained her.

Not an hour, however, before we heard her voice, loud, sharp, passionate, while the mother's was soft, low, beseeching: "Why give way to this passionate temper? Will you never restrain yourself, my child?"

We did not choose to hear more, and going to the instrument, tried to drown it, by playing the old songs that we knew the mother loved. She came in presently, and sinking down into a velvet covered easy-chair, put her hands over her face, and wept bitterly.

"Forgive my tears, darling; your music is just what it used to be, soft, sweet, loving."

Yes; but I knew it was not the music. O, how terrible it must be to be the mother of an ungrateful, undutiful child.

We acknowledge the receipt of *Fun*, from Mr. John Kromer, 403 Chestnut street.

NEW PUBLICATIONS.

Education in the Society of Friends, Past, Present, and Prospective. By Edward Parrish. We would call the attention of our readers to a judicious volume on the above subject. It treats of "The Early Friends, English Schools, American Schools, Schools of Orthodox Friends, Private Boarding Schools, Swarthmore College, The Site, The Building, Scheme of Instruction," &c. The writer closes with a warm appeal in behalf of Swarthmore College. Published by J. B. Lippincott & Co., Philadelphia.

"A Summer in Skye." By Alexander Smith. Published by Ticknor & Fields. For sale by G. W. Pitcher, Philadelphia.

☞ A Doubtful Case.—"Look here, ma!" said a young lady who had commenced taking lessons in painting of an eminent artist. "See my painting; can you tell what it is?"

Ma, after looking at it for some time, answered:

"Well, it is either a cow or a rosebud—I am sure I can't tell which."

☞ "Ma," said the pride of the family, who had seen some seven summers, "Do you know why our tom-cat is like a post?" Ma didn't. "Why," exclaimed the precious pet, "doesn't he go out moonlight nights to invoke the mews?"

☞ A child four weeks old was found on a doorstep in Waterford, Ct., a short time ago, with a note stating that it was of good birth, and the finders would be liberally rewarded for bringing it up. The following directions were added: "Give him one cow's milk, with one-half water, and a teaspoonful of brandy to one gill of food." A supply of handsome clothing, a bottle of brandy, some medicine, and a pail of sugar were also left.

☞ Dr. Channing, in his recent lecture before the Boston Social Science Association, said that the Russian peasantry had a way of washing which he had not seen related in any book of travels. They took a mouthful of water from the pump, and, after holding it until the chill was well off, spurted it, with a lively jet, into the hands, and applied it briskly to the face. Towels they have none.

☞ An accident occurred on one of the railroads recently, caused by the axel of tender giving away, detaining the train several hours. A lady inquired of a gentleman passenger, why it was so delayed; he gravely replied: "Madam, it was occasioned by what is often followed by serious consequences—the sudden breaking of a "tender attachment." The lady looked serious and was silent.

☞ Mrs. Jefferson Davis is residing at the house of a Mr. Schuyler, near Augusta, Georgia. She enjoys her usual robust health, is under no surveillance, and is permitted to correspond at will with her husband and friends.

☞ "Massa C., do you know lawyer ———, in de same building whar your office is?" "Oh, yes," I replied, "very well." "Gosh," said Bill, "he's got de littlest head of any man I ever seed." At this remark, a big, fat, cuffy negro, lounging on a settee, spoke up: "What use a man got wid a big trunk when he ain't got no clothes?"

The House of Wolf.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

"So, American Fraulein, you laugh at me. You believe me not."

"No, Count August. No, I don't laugh at you; and no, I don't believe you. My reason tells me better, and I would not believe in a ghost if I saw it myself. I know there is no language so rich in legends of the supernatural as your beautiful German tongue, and I have sat spell-bound, enchanted, I might say, through the still hours of many a long night, reading translations of these old German tales, when I was at school. But I never believed them, and I didn't think anybody else ever did."

"Young lady, my uncle, the American Wolf, sends you over to us to learn German. You cannot catch the spirit of our language till you have faith in our traditions. Your country makes an American of my uncle, Castle Von Wolf shall make a German of you, *schones Fraulein*. And you shall be happy, here on the Rhine. Because in America your mother was kind to my uncle, the insurrectionist, the banished-from-his-country, he takes you for his own child, when you are left alone, and sends you to us on the old Rhine, and writes to us: 'Make her happy, my little girl.' Oh, we will, American *Lilie!* And you will learn my language, and all the traditions of the house Von Wolf."

"I thank you, Count of Wolf, and I am very happy already. But I never can believe in your traditions, your *Geistscherei* and your *Wahr-wolves*."

"Fraulein Alice, the founder of the house of Wolf was a Wahr-wolf. Has my uncle never told you?"

"Never; and I should have remembered it only as a fairy tale if he had. But, Count August, you do not believe it?"

The young man's voice sunk almost to a whisper:

"It is true. My father has seen him; my grandfather saw him. He walks through this castle, at night, sometimes."

"Have you ever seen him, Count August?"

"No; my time is not yet," with almost a shudder, and an unfathomable look from his dark eyes on the bright, American face. Then he went on:

"I know not how to tell you our household legends in your language. My father, the old Wolf, will write it down for you, and I, the young Wolf, will learn my English better, and teach you German, too. Is it not true?"

And his black, southern eyes looked at her earnestly, tenderly, if only she would have acknowledged their magnetic meaning.

This is the legend:

A long, long time ago, a thousand years it must have been, all through the forests of Europe were terrible creatures called *Wahr-wolves*. They were of the form of a man, with the face and claws of a wolf. They were ferocious and malignant, and were believed to be demons of the most evil sort, put upon earth by Satan to snatch away the souls of children for his dark kingdom. They would drag away the poor little ones in their sleep, then tear to pieces and devour them. This was their food. The foresters used to see them sometimes at daybreak, bounding away to the forest with the dead, bleeding body of the innocent they had stolen from its mother's breast. And the woodsman would shiver with a cold horror which was more than fear, for the sight of a Wahr-wolf, with his ghastly, bloody jaws, and his burning, devil's eye, boded no good to one of mortal birth. It was said, too, that sometimes these frightful beings showed traces of human passion, for when young and lovely maidens strayed away from their homes, or wandered in the edge of a wood at nightfall, the Wahr-wolf had been known to dart down from a tree upon the fairest and sweetest, and drag her by the hair, shrieking in wild terror, to his den in the deep woods, uttering as he went screaming, fiendish yells of triumph, and there make her his wife. And woe, black woe to the wretched maiden who became the Wahr-wolf's wife! For his wolfish nature soon overcame his human nature, and in a little time he would fly at her throat, kill her cruelly, and then drink her blood. Then he would carry away her guiltless soul to his master, the devil, and leave her poor body dead and stiff in the woods. But he would never come back to his old den after this; and if the friends of the unhappy bride could ever find her corpse, they might take it and give it burial. But this happened no oftener than once in a century.

About the time these demon wolves first made their appearance among men, and were consequently most dreaded, there dwelt near the river Vistula a powerful, yellow-haired chief, named Alan. He had many fighting men, and one daughter, the Princess Dagma, beautiful as the full moon, yellowed-haired like her father, only her hair flowed down to her feet, covering her like a veil. One unhappy evening, at sunset, this fair Princess Dagma, the beloved of her father and the pride of his people, went out with her maidens to meet Chief Alan coming home victorious from a battle with his enemy, Chief Ulric. The shadow of night began to fall, still her father did not come, and the lovely Dagma sat down underneath a great oak to wait for him. But, oh! what agony to the tribe of Alan! In one instant, like a flash of lightning, there sprang from the branches of the oak a terrible, black Wahr-wolf, who, fixing his long, frightful teeth into the milk-white arm of the princess, and wrapping his claws in her sweeping, golden hair, carried her off in the twinkling of an eye, before the very face of all her women. And when Chief Alan came up, a little after, with his brave men carrying their slings and bows and arrows, they saw the maidens wringing their hands, tearing their hair, and shrieking, but no beautiful Princess Dagma. The only words the maidens could utter, in their grief and terror, were:

"The Wolf! The black Wahr-wolf!"

After this fearful thing happened, Chief Alan never went to war, never held up his head again, but died soon of a broken heart. And after his death the Alans would live no longer on the banks of the Vistula, for they said the place was accursed, but journeyed to the far westward, half their number dying of famine on the way, and because no one in all the tribe could take the place of mighty, yellow-haired Alan, the scattered feeble remnant united with the tribe of the Sueves.

Only one old couple remained by the Vistula, because they were too infirm to travel with their people. One morning, it was three years since the Wahr-wolf had carried off Princess Dagma, this poor old husband and wife went into the woods to gather the roots which formed their daily food. They went deeper into the woods than was their wont, for it was late in summer, and the roots were becoming scarcer each day, when shortly they heard a strange wail. It might have been the plaintive howl of a dog, it might, too, have been the cry of a child. They looked in every direction, and presently they saw, near the mouth of a cave in some rocks, a dead woman and a living child, lying on the ground. It was the strangest child. He had wild, black hair, and his eyes were so black and bright and fierce, that the two old people were terrified, and would have fled, only that the boy's eyes had a dazzling, unearthly power in them, which drew the frightened old couple towards him in spite of themselves. So they went nearer, and behold! the dead woman was the Princess Dagma. Yes; the beautiful, royal face was sharp and pinched, the silken, yellow hair was tangled and worn away with grief, but it was their lost Dagma, and this wild, dark boy was the Wahr-wolf's son. A dreadful wound in the throat told how the poor princess came to her death. Then the two old creatures buried Dagma, and were fain to let the evil child die in the forest, but here again the wierd splendor of his eyes held them and beckoned them to him against their will. Trembling and calling continually on the name of the great wolf-god Fenris, "who had strength sufficient to shake the universe," they went to this demon boy, carried him to their miserable home, and from that day fed him and took care of him. They named him Alan, from the yellow-haired chief, his grandfather. He early showed a fierce and angry disposition. In his paroxysms of rage he would beat with his fists against the trees, and even strike his preservers. But they never dared strike him, for fear of his eye, and the same power commanded them as long they lived, which was until this strange boy was ten years old. After their death, the Wahr-wolf's son did not even bury them, but left them lying in the woods, and wandered to the west, even as the Alans had done before him. A mortal child would have starved to death, but Dagma's son had some of the propensities of his wolf-father, and this gave him strength to slay wild animals and eat their raw flesh. So he travelled on for three years, through swamp and forest, over mountain and valley, till he came to a great river which the Romans named Rhenus, and which the people of these times call the Rhine.

One day some men of the tribe of the Franks, who dwelt upon the banks of this river, found a dark child of fierce and terrible aspect, with tangled black hair covering all his naked body. He could speak but the one word: "Alan." The Franks carried him to their chief, who commanded him to be fed, and thus it came to pass that he lived thereafter among the Frank people. As time passed on and he learned the Frank speech, he told them that his grandfather had been chief of the Alans, and that himself was the son of Princess Dagma and a Wahr-wolf whom she had been forced to marry. Then indeed the Franks would have fallen upon him and stoned him to death, but dared not, for the dazzling, demon power of his black eyes. So Alan the Wolf abode with the Franks, and became the most valiant warrior of the tribe. His name was a terror to all the people around, and carried victory wherever the Franks went. By-and-by the king gave his cousin's daughter to the Wolf in marriage. Remembering that he was a Wahr-wolf's son, he does not seem at first to have beaten his Frank wife much oftener than was the custom of men in those times, but as he became older, his wolf-nature grew stronger, and one day, when he was an old man, in a great rage he seized his poor, faithful wife by the throat and strangled her. He died soon after in the deepest remorse.

When he was dead the Franks seemed to lose their power. Neighboring tribes no longer feared them, because they had no longer the terrible Alan Von Wolf among them, and becoming every day weaker, they at last migrated to the southwest. But the sons of Alan refused to leave the river Rhenus, and in after times their descendants became incorporated with the tribes around, and scattered all through Germany. But the elder branch of the house Von Wolf has always lived by the river Rhine, and about a hundred and fifty years ago, Count Albrecht Von Wolf founded the castle still occupied by the family. Although the Von Wolfs, in the course of years, have happily lost all traces of their demon origin, and have come to be only noted for being very brave, and utterly fearless of danger, still in bodily appearance, all retain somewhat the looks of the fierce Alan. And what is extraordinary, every descendant of that ancestor has the same black, wonderful eyes, which possess, in a greater or less degree, the strange power of attracting persons by some unknown force, and compelling them by a glance to follow the bidding of these mysterious eyes. Modern times call this power animal magnetism, and by giving it a name, think they have explained it, but be that as it may, in all the world, wherever you find a true descendant of Alan Von Wolf, he will invariably be very dark, and have this strange charm in his eye.

Moreover, it is said that, because the Wahr-wolf and his son Alan both strangled their wives, they seem to wish to prevent this crime from ever happening again among their children, so that, whenever a son of the elder branch of the house of Wolf is about to be married, the demon-wolf, the husband of poor Dagma, appears in a dream, if the marriage is to be propitious, to the bridegroom, simply licking his face and departing; but if unpropitious, to the bride, seizing her at the throat, and leaving two purple spots upon her white neck—and woe to both the Von Wolf and the unhappy maiden if this warning be disregarded.

In the last three hundred years he has appeared to a bride but just once, which speaks well for the good taste of the Count Von Wolf. This time the Wahr-wolf was heeded; and well it was so, for the young girl whose slumbers he visited afterward, became a raging maniac, and killed both her father and brother with an axe.

Such was the tradition of the house of Wolf.

Alice closed the book, and gazed musingly out upon the smooth-flowing Rhine. Count August sat opposite her in the deep window-seat. Her eyes were fixed on the bright water, *his* eyes saw only her.

At last, with a sudden start—

"Count August, is this story of the Wahr-wolf true?"

"Fraulein Alice, my father saw him."

"And if he should give you the warning of this legend, Count of Wolf?"

"Young lady," looking at her still and ever with his dark, earnest eye, "there are faces on this earth now and then, for which a man would defy His Majesty, the devil."

And the bright days went on. Once August said—

"After this day I shall call you no more Alice, but America, the name of your father-land, because you have golden hair, and are like the picture of your goddess of liberty. From this time I name you beautiful America, Goddess of Liberty."

After that he called her always America.

Still the bright days went on. America learned German; August learned English; and both together learned the old, old, sweet lesson, conned even when the morning stars sang together, old as the everlasting hills, and yet forever new.

One morning August brought a new volume of poems, Koerner, it was; and they read on and on through its pages till both their souls were filled with the sublime inspiration of the hero-poet. Then all at once August turned over the leaves and read to her, no longer a war lyric, but the simple, tender, "*Augen der Geliebten*," her eyes wandering as ever out over the bright Rhine. He finished the last line, then looked at America. She could not choose but answer that look, for he willed it, then looking at her still, with an ineffable sweetness in his eyes, he repeated, softly, softly:

"*Augen,*
Wollt ihr meine sterne sein?"

Could it be otherwise?

Then a flash of radiant gladness broke over his bright, eager face, and he said, in quick, joyful tones:

"Oh, my Goddess of Liberty! Oh, *meine Liebe!* You will indeed be the Black Wolf's wife, my *Wolfs-braut!* Oh, golden-haired Princess! The Black Wolf will put his long paws about you, and hold you so fast and close to him here in his den, that he will never let you go away over the water again."

And America, glancing up, smiling through happy, happy tears—

"But he won't eat me, will he?"

And August Von Wolf caught her in his arms, and holding her for a moment, looked at her as if he could in truth have devoured her with his eyes, out of pure love. Then he led her lightly, tenderly to the gray-haired Von Wolf.

"My father! you have *two* now."

The old man, with dimming eyes, answered:

"*Kinder!* My beloved children! May the All-Good bless you forever."

Of the happy week that followed, no pen can sufficiently make record. Strangers who by chance saw this beautiful, princely pair together would pause to gaze upon them as upon some blessed vision. Old servants of the castle say that no happiness on earth was ever like theirs, so complete, so full of joy. They used to sing together, German and English songs; and one they sang oftenest was the English air, "Home, Sweet Home," which America had taught August. Sometimes, in the moonlit evenings, they and the old Count would go out on the river in a little boat, and while the jewelled water dripped from the oars, and the light winds wafted soft odors from the gardens on shore, they would sing "Sweet Home;" and those who used to hear the sounds floating shoreward, said it seemed to be the singing of angel voices coming down from Heaven.

Still the bright days went on, till it came the day before their wedding. That morning America sat in her old place, looking always out on the shining Rhine. She wore some kind of blue dress, the rich, far-off, radiant blue of a June sky. Count August came up lightly behind her, then took four silver stars and fastened them, three on her shoulders and bosom, and one in the bright hair over her brow. Then he took a red and white embroidered scarf, twisted it around her waist, and let the long ends and rich fringe trail down over her blue dress.

"There, child, you are draped in the flag of your wild country."

And he drew a low chair to her feet, took her white hand tenderly in his own dark one, and placed on her finger a ring of deep, deep flashing sapphire, encircled with diamonds. Then he said, with a look from his passionate, lustrous eyes, which drew her very soul out to meet him:

"Beautiful America, Goddess of Liberty, do you love me a little now? Tell me, oh, my yellow-haired Princess! do you love your Black Wolf?"

"*Love you!*" And the unspeakable intensity of that great, grand love for a moment transformed the blushing maiden into a stately woman, and she answered in a still, solemn, thrilling voice:

"Oh, my August! Oh, my life! I love you with a love which is stronger than death, with a love which shall endure even after you and I both shall have passed through the golden gates into life everlasting."

But neither remembered that August had not yet seen the Wahr-wolf.

That night at midnight a frightful cry pierced through the old castle, followed by shriek after shriek which curdled with horror the blood of those who heard, for the sound was like the agony of a lost soul in the clutches of a fiend. It came from America's room, and in a few seconds both the Von Wolfs and two servants were at the door. While with a terror of he knew not what, August burst open the door. To this day the one old man yet alive who saw that sight starts up from his sleep shrieking in a deathly fear, at the mere remembrance in a dream of what he saw that night. On the floor in the middle of the room, her white lips covered with foam, her eyes glazed with the wildness of insanity, a horrible wound in her throat—from which the bright, young life-stream was gushing in great torrents, lay the beautiful maiden in her death-agony. As the parting breath came in gasps, in a husky voice her stiffening lips articulated:

"THE WAHR-WOLF!"

Suddenly a hot blast, as it had been the scorching of a devil's breath, fell upon them, and *something* drew their dilating eyes to the open window. They all saw it, every living soul in that room saw it, with its wrathful, fiend's eye, and its ghastly, grinning jaws. That moment August snatched a pistol from his pocket, and before the old Von Wolf could grasp the arm of the frenzied youth, he had fired at the accursed thing. But instead of a pistol report came an appalling, unearthly sound, and the next moment the fair castle was a mass of unsightly ruins, with August Von Wolf and his America buried beneath. The old Count never spoke again, and in two days he died. In a week his old servant followed him, killed by the horror of that night.

That was twenty years ago, and the sole survivor of that fearful scene is the other servant, a feeble old man, who has sworn never again to relate this tragedy to mortal man. Some who were servants at Castle Von Wolf still live, but they believe it was struck by lightning, and this is the opinion which prevails through the neighborhood. Only they say that in the grand, modern mansion now built near the ruins of Castle Von Wolf, of moonlight evenings, from the windows looking out over the Rhine, sometimes are heard strains of music unspeakably sweet and unearthly. And in the tones of this spirit-music, for it can be no mortal music, are heard thrilling notes which some say are like the old English air, "Home, Sweet Home." And that every summer, at a certain season, if you will sit in the moonlight and listen, there will come to you softly, solemnly, up through the still midnight air, in through the window, the dying strains of that sweet, lost music.

ZIG.

South American Civilization.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY COSMO.

Westward, Ho—A Buenos Ayrean Caravan—A Pampa Fandango—Hides and Horns—A Surprise Party.

I am of the opinion that the *Herdeiro*-General, Don Manuel Rosas, was not particularly pleased with the semi-official report of our expedition to Assumption. But our hydro and topographical plans of the approaches to, and defences of, the Parayguan capital, convinced him beyond a doubt that he could turn his energies and the resources of the Argentine Confederacy to better account than attempting the subjugation of his northern neighbors.

During our month of busy preparations in making up our *mount* and outfit for another wandering jaunt over the pampas, our amiable and intelligent M. D. had made the acquaintance of, and fallen very deeply into favor with, two medical gentlemen of Cordova, who were in Buenos Ayres on some private financial business, and the two Buenos Ayrean doctors having been introduced, by our doctor, to our whole party, and so enamored, I think, of Miss Edith Bond, and our "Belle of Boston,"—Miss Dory Ives, that they insisted upon our taking Cordova in our route, spending a few days in, and in the neighborhood of, that fine little provincial city, begging permission to become temporary members of our party.

We accepted the two handsome, gentlemanly M. D.'s companionship and invitation; and so instead of pushing on a course due west, towards Mendoza, when we left the Argentine capital, we bent our line away northwest towards Cordova, distant a little less than four hundred miles. We might have reached a point within one hundred miles of Cordova by the rivers Parana and Salado, but we preferred the free and easy, vagabond life in the saddle; besides a journey by land would afford us a knowledge of the country and people inhabiting it—very likely bring us adventures of some sort, and that alone was half the charm of our Bohemian practices.

Between Buenos Ayres and the River Tercero, the first considerable branch of the Parana, we met with many incidents, that might be made interesting, perhaps, in a seven hundred page book, but scarcely intelligible in a ten page, letter-size sketch, and so passing them by, let us lay hold of the first appropriate object that presents itself.

That is a Buenos Ayrean caravan—an emigrant train, bound from the Argentine capital, towards Tucuman, on the head waters of the Rio Dulce, more than a thousand miles northwest from us, and of course travelling in our direction, or rather in the one we were going. So having nothing to hurry us forward, we reduce our rate of speed to correspond with that of the snail train, begin to make acquaintances, and for a day or so keep company with the pampa voyagers.

Now coming upon an emigrant train from the Atlantic States of North America to any region of the far west, we should look in vehicles "put up" for the racks, wrenches, and vicissitudes of so long a journey, for a combination of lightness, neatness, comfort, and strength. So we might on the Buenos Ayrean pampas—but we should find nothing of it, unless it might be something of the last-named requisite. These monster ox-carts of the pampas are ponderous enough in all conscience to be the perfection of that quality. But then bulk does not in all instances constitute endurance, as the crippled and wrecked vehicles along the route we are travelling prove.

Reader, have you ever imagined a wheeled machine that you could call a *cart*, made up substantially like this?

Solid wheels of hard, heavy wood, nine feet in diameter, and eighteen inches thick. An axle that in size would make a corner post for a barn, morticed into the wheels solid, so that it turns with them, two scores rounded where the bed-pieces of the body lie across it, with a triangular notch like an inverted A. Upon these beds, ten inches square and twenty feet long, is built a corn-crib looking cabin, widest by two feet at the top, and sided up and roofed with raw hides. A rude, rough tongue, twenty feet in length, to which is attached a pair of bullocks, yoked with a great, rough stick seven feet long, lashed across their horns, another pair ahead of these wheelers, and another before them, and so on, until ten pair of bullocks are strung out with, say three mounted drivers on each side of the line, each one armed with a goad, twenty feet long, having in its end a keen, sharp spur two inches in length, which they stab into the poor brutes upon the slightest provocation, and frequently enough without any provocation whatever.

Pack one of these ponderous vehicles with goods and chattels, all sorts of senoras, from the wrinkled, frightful old hag, down to the bright-eyed, rosy-cheeked little senorita, squalling fowls, barking puppies, and chattering *muchachas*, and you have a true picture—not an atom exaggerated, of a Buenos Ayrean caravan cart. Place forty of these uncouth nondescripts in a line, with their eight hundred bullocks, two hundred and forty guides, six hundred or so noisy, rough riding cavallieros, and you can form some conception of the appearance of the caravan we overtook one pleasant afternoon, not long after crossing the Tercero.

We had always found these *caravaneiros* a jovial, jolly set, wherever we had met them, and these last were no exceptions to the rule. Besides almost every member of our party found acquaintances among the emigrants; and in two instances something more than mere acquaintances, as we shall see during the evening.

The migrating army was made up of all classes of Buenos Ayrean society—the rich *herderio* with his family and furniture, the mechanic, artisan, and common laborer. But on the road they were all equals—no distinction of classes there. A more free, social, democratic community was never encountered anywhere.

The majority of the voyagers had come from Buenos Ayres and its vicinity, and were going to colonize a fertile territory in the beautiful Province of Tucuman, a few leagues from the city of the same name. We very soon had invitations from all quarters, to continue on and camp that night with the caravan, partake of their hospitalities, and join them in a grand out-door fandango. We said yes, and very soon were dispersed promiscuously among our new, and here and there one of our old friends.

The time passed pleasantly until the camp had been established and supper disposed of, and then began such a festive scene as only the free, careless, South American *campaneros* can achieve in perfection. That caravan encounter and the evening's fandango, lost us, and gained for the Tucuman colonists three members of our party—whom we had learned to hold in very high estimation, and were exceedingly sorrow to part with.

We had only here and there got a glimpse of a beautiful, bright-eyed senora within the locomotive hide houses, during the ride, but when the clear, full moon rose, and guitars and castanets began their merry twang and click, they came out by scores and joined in *cuiquiva*, waltz, or fantastic *balero*.

There was a young Boston gentleman, named Elmer Maynard, very highly cultivated, refined, handsome, companionable, and of great wealth, who, with his beautiful, spirited sister Lillian, had been with us from the inauguration of our wandering expedition in Brazil. No one, unless it was Lillian, knew what it was that had sent Elmer Maynard from his home, vagabondizing through the semi-civilized regions of South America. But I think we all guessed in one direction, and held our tongues. Some love affair and a disappointment. It was no business of ours, and we asked no questions.

Maynard was standing near me, when there came lightly out from one of the great carts, a lady whom I could see by the combined light of the full moon, and our flashing camp fire, was young and beautiful as a dream. Maynard uttered a quick, glad cry, rushed forward, seized first, both the lovely girl's hands—held them for a few moments. Then suddenly releasing them, the girl flung both her arms around the handsome young fellow's neck and murmured loud enough for those near to hear her—

"Elmer—Caro Mio?"

While a few of us stood wondering, Elmer Maynard and the beautiful Buenos Ayrean locked arms, swung gracefully off in the fascinating *Tarantala*, and were lost in the whirling maze of humanity.

Directly after this little episode, I saw our handsome young Swedish Naturalist—Charles Delmain, dart down towards a sparkling little brown beauty, and after a few words of apparently earnest conversation, whirl away with her in the dance, as Maynard had done with his lovely companion.

For more than an hour the revel went bravely on, when all at once the cry went up everywhere—"*Hides and Horns!* Ho, Hides and Horns!"

In an instant there was a universal rush towards the carts, and then—such a sight. In ten minutes there were five hundred revellers transformed into dancing satyrs, wearing hides of cows and bullocks, so dressed as to be as pliant as a woven cloak—men and women were everywhere dancing, waltzing, reeling, wearing hairy hides of every color, the horns pointing upwards, and tails whisking in every direction. It was a saturnalia of pandemonium.

The wild, wierd dance was interrupted by the stentorian lungs of our M. D. and salt-water companion, who suddenly set up a roar of:

"Ho—Bohemians—To the camp-fire! To the cart of Don Pastor Garcia! Come in to the wedding of the Satyrs! Hides and Horns! Come in, Bohemians! Rally—*Rally*—Hurrah—Viva!"

The conveyance of Don Pastor Garcia, the rich *herdiero*, was marked by the Buenos Ayrean flag flying above it, and towards that point every "Bohemian" instantly rallied.

"A wedding of the Satyrs, comrades!" shouted Dr. Bond in great glee. "Elmer Maynard, and Donna Celestia Garcia—Charley Delmain, our handsome root-digger, and Senora Valencia Du Portail—the little Dutch-French-Buenos-Ayrean Gipsy Queen."

Thus was as singular a wedding as ever occurred in this world perhaps, announced, and by the light of the moon and the blaze of our great camp-fire—amid hides and horns—bridegrooms and brides, so uncouthly clad—was the strange, dual ceremony consummated by two *padres* who were with the emigrant party. It was a grand surprise party all round.

The explanation is briefly this:

Donna Celestia and Senora Valencia were cousins, the latter an orphan and the ward of her uncle—Don Pastor. Both were heiresses. Two years previously, by the wreck of a river packet near Montevideo, the cousins were in imminent danger of perishing. Elmer Maynard and Charles Delmain, at the risk of their own lives, had rescued them. As a natural sequence all parties fell everlastingly in love with each other. But when the young men demanded of the rich herdiero the hands of his niece and daughter he laughed at them. What—bestow his darling children upon nameless adventurers? Never. Don Pastor pointed to a herd of cattle grazing in the distance, and said:

"When my children, and you, senors, take to wearing *Hides and Horns* like yonder brutes, you shall marry them. Not before."

Don Pastor sold his estate near Montevideo, removed to Buenos Ayres, and the lovers lost all traces of each other. Two years had passed, and by a providential freak of fortune they met again thus singularly on the pampa, and when the Saturnalia assumed the Satyr's guise of *Hides and Horns*, the united lovers surprised Don Pastor in their brute garb, and demanded the fulfillment of his promise. He consented on condition that the young gentlemen should become members of his household, and share his fortune and fortunes in Tucuman.

They accepted the terms—Lillian, of course, would remain with her brothers, and so we lost the most estimable and entertaining members of our Bohemian party.

☞ Samuel B. Thompson, a young man in Henrietta, who is afflicted with periodical attacks of insanity, went to Rochester the other day and drew $1,500 from a bank, and, repairing to the market, purchased a load of potatoes, which he gave to a stranger. He gave away bank-notes by the handful to strangers, and when taken into custody by the police, had but $50 left. Several hundred dollars were subsequently recovered.

☞ A lady wrote to her lover, begging him to send her some money. She added, by way of postscript: "I am so ashamed of the request I have made in this letter, that I sent after the postman to get it back, but the servant *could not overtake him.*"

AL'ABANDON.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

A crimson cloud, a yellow star,
A moaning ocean shell:
A silver wave, a coral bar,
An island in the sea afar,
A diver's sullen bell.

A lily in a valley low,
A limpid mountain stream,
A mountain capped with purest snow,
In purple light of clouds a-glow,
A poet's rhythmed dream.

Sad eyes! the crimson cloud so nigh,
The vapor of thy tears:
Hangs 'twixt thee and the yellow light,
Of that dear star of hope so bright,
In sky of future years.

Thou heart! the echoing string in thee,
Is like the ocean shell;
The notes from life's emerging sea,
Are ever murmured low by thee,
In hushed and solemn swell.

And searching soul! the silver wave,
That beats the coral bar,
Is rolling o'er the ocean cave,
Where sleeps the pearl thou feign wouldst have,
Hast sought in vain afar.

The verdant isle thine own sure rest,
When once the pearl is thine;
But thou must seek it, and thy breast,
Must courage own—an honored guest,
That thou mayest search the mine.

The sullen bell—bring toil or pain,
Thou must a diver be,
Or the bright gem—one thought to gain—
From its dark mine were all in vain—
Yes, thou must brave the sea.

Or wouldst thou still prefer to keep
Thy lily of the vale,
At mountain base still dream in sleep,
The mountain stream is dark and deep,
The snow is cold and pale?

Canst thou forget the purple flame?
Beyond the silver stream,
That bathes in light the heights of fame,
Where written is the Poet's name
Above his rhythmed dream.

Can'st thou not banish feverish fears,
With passioned dreams and wild,
That have not won thee from thy tears,
Since thou in other, brighter years,
Dwelt in and moved a child?

Chiding at random that no more
The wild, impassioned thought,
A panting soul hangs at the door,
Of the dream-temple that of yore,
Strange Poet-brains had wrought.

There is a time ere sorrow throws
A shadow in the light,
The soul in singing buds and blows,
As fragrant blossoms as the rose,
In dewy summer night. VIRGNA.

MARRYING A MEEK WIFE.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY FRANCES HENRIETTA SHEFFIELD.

"If ever I marry," said Mr. Hiram Molesworthy, confidentially to his sparkling cousin, Belle Rochover. "I will wed a meek woman. A wife should be content to shine with her husband's light, reflect his opinions, and in short, be totally absorbed in him. Her beauties, her genius, should only form the graceful appendages of his life."

"So a model wife, according to your ideas, is only her lord's first slave, like a Turkish Sultana. Humph! I am glad you are not my spouse. There might be contention, I fancy."

"To speak candidly, Cousin Belle, I always wondered how John managed to subdue you, you are naturally so restive."

"Subdue me!" and the lady threw up her hand, and shook back her long curls with the air and action of a high-mettled Arabian. "It's well for him he never tried. John and I each go our own way, and have things so admirably arranged, we never run on each other's time, to use railroad nomenclature."

Mr. Molesworthy shook his head sorrowfully. "Such doctrine is contrary to nature, to Scripture,—"

"And, Hiram Molesworthy, as a grand climax," broke in his antagonist, uncourteously. "Well I hope you'll find the paragon you are in search of."

"I expect to find her," was the reply, delivered with lofty, masculine certainty. "But business duties call me Westward. Adieu, my misguided cousin."

Scarcely had the door closed after the departing visitor, when the heavy silken draperies of the windows were disturbed, and a bright, arch face presented itself to view.

"You wretch!" cried Belle, "what have you been doing with yourself there?"

"Have patience, lady mio, and I will tell thee all."

"Thou hadst best," with a tragedy air.

"I was sitting by the window reading, when your remarkable cousin came. Having never met him, I did not care to make myself visible. Furthermore, stepping so suddenly into view, he might have taken me for a ghost, thereby endangering his valuable life. Have I cleared myself, oh! most wise judge?"

"I will have you indicted for nonsense, in all the degrees, if you don't behave better. You heard his hetrodox opinions?"

"Did I not? I have been making faces through the window by way of relieving my outraged feelings."

"Hiram is really a good fellow, if it were not for one fault—his domineering spirit. I once heard a gentleman, a friend of mine, say, 'All the difference there is in persons' characters is owing to the manner in which they bumped their heads when children.' Now Cousin Hiram, according to that theory, must perpetually have fallen backward, thereby bringing up self-esteem. Who don't have a front seat in the brain in contact with the floor, causing that organ to be always puffed up."

Clare Bravedon laughed. "He ought to undergo a course of medical treatment, to reduce the swelling and inflammation. Shall I take him in hand professionally?"

"You, the most spoiled and willful of mortals! A pretty one for the task, truly."

"You speak of my old *role*. Wait until you see me enact the part of lady meekness."

"I'll engage a box for the play, forthwith."

"What reward shall I have, if I succeed in curing this unfortunate gentleman?"

"Himself; I'm a relative, and can give him away."

"And I may claim him honest and true, as children say?"

"Here's my hand upon it."

"When shall you see him again?"

"He's coming day after to-morrow to criticise a new painting of mine. He never touched a brush in his life, but he believes he was endowed at his birth with such wonderful genius, learning is quite preposterous. I presume he thinks had he been cotemporary with Michael Angelo or Titian, he might have taught the former something about grandeur and sublimity, and given the latter some useful hints in coloring."

The day specified for the artist's visit came; Belle was in her studio to receive him, and introduced her companion, Miss Bravedon. Glancing slightly at the young lady, Mr. Molesworthy proceeded to display his ignorance of painting as rapidly as possible.

The picture on Belle's easel was a landscape, an original piece, and really a fine thing, though not without faults of drawing and coloring. The clouds rolling up, soft and fleecy, on a summer's sky, looked like clouds, and seemed to melt away, or take new and fantastic shapes, as you gazed. And the meadow brook, glancing here and there from between the dark foliage that lined its broken banks, it reminded you of a merry child playing at bo-peep. So real and cool looked the water, you longed to test it, and scare away its tiny inhabitants. It was natural, too; the flowers that grew the closest to the bright, freed brook, should wave in rich luxuriance.

Ignoring these beauties of the painting, Mr. Molesworthy proceeded to point out the defects of the piece, as being worthy of especial notice.

Belle had not always done justice to her fine conceptions. The hand must be trained to work out the mind's imaginings.

Belle's wrath was soon aroused by her cousin's aggravating praise—which she well knew was no praise; but Miss Bravedon professed to consider all his criticisms just. This led the flustered gentleman to regard the young lady more closely than he had hitherto done.

It seemed hardly possible, the arch little rogue of a few days before, could have been metamorphosed into the prim, meek lady, who sat with open mouth and eyes, drinking in his words of wisdom.

"Oh! Belle," she cried, as if the exclamation was forced from her by irresistible enthusiasm, "how much you might learn from Mr. Molesworthy. If he were my cousin—"

She stopped in the midst of her speech, as if maidenly timidity had taken the alarm.

"Mrs. Rochover does not believe in man's mental superiority," said Mr. Molesworthy, with a glance that was meant to be withering, but somehow failed of its effect.

"Oh! Belle, you are not strong-minded, I hope," counterfeiting a shudder. "It's so horrid, you know."

"I hope no erroneous opinions will find entrance into some minds," said our hero, bowing gallantly towards Miss Bravedon, and looking at Belle, as if she were some fearful monster in woman's clothes, trying to lead tender intellects astray.

Belle was so thoroughly amused with this new character fitted upon her, she could hardly wait for her visitor to be gone, ere giving vent to her mirth.

"Am I a dragon—honor bright, Clare?"

"Don't be infecting me with your wickedness, thou thing of dread. And did I play my part pretty well?"

"You little humbug! But you remember the story in which Puss, dresses up like a fine lady, and sits down to do the honors of the tea-table. Her claws came out, however, before the meal was over."

"Never fear for me," said Clare, holding out her white, dimpled hands, and examining her almond-shaped nails closely.

Mr. Molesworthy did not let his acquaintance with Miss Bravedon drop; he managed to see her often. And she improved daily in meekness.

One evening he met her at a little sociable at a friend's.

Here, grouped with one or two rather juvenile misses, was holding forth in that "high-falutin," gushing style, girls sometimes affect, conscious of its silliness all the while, but instigated by some imp of the perverse, to make themselves ridiculous.

Mr. Molesworthy stood it as long as mortal man could be expected to, and then broke in with,

"My dear Miss Bravedon, how can you do yourself the injustice of talking in that way?"

Now, a girl of any spirit, reproved in public by her lover, would have persisted in what she was saying, if she died for it. Not so, Clare. With an expression of most edifying contrition, she immediately changed the subject.

"The one for me," thought the enraptured Molesworthy. "The very pearl I have long been seeking."

Not long after, Clare had so distinguished herself in her suitor's eyes, he called at Belle's, where Clare was staying, to take Miss Bravedon to drive.

Mrs. Rochover and her guest had been engaged that day in looking over the latest fashions. By their joint efforts, the ladies had succeeded in scraping, twisting, and torturing Clare's naturally soft, beautiful hair, into a coiffure of orthodox hideousness. Elated with their success, Miss Bravedon sat to be admired. Admiration was not forthcoming, however, at least from Mr. Molesworthy. In reality, our friend Hiram knew nothing about different modes of dressing the hair, and couldn't have told the difference between a waterfall, and the huge tortoise-shell comb, our grandmothers wore; but by way of experiment, he chose to find fault with Clare's style.

Glancing at the tiny clock that reposed upon the mantle-piece, among other gems, Clare said, with unruffled sweetness,

"We need not start in a quarter of an hour. I can rearrange my hair."

Thus saying, she tripped lightly from the room.

"She is very docile, you see," spoke up Belle.

"Ye—s," was the response; but hurriedly given in as rapturous a tone as might have been expected. The fact is, it is man's nature to subdue; and Clare was so thoroughly subdued, there lacked the excitement of a contest.

Belle stooped down, apparently to pick some trifle from the carpet; but in reality, to hide a suspicious convulsion that agitated her frame.

During the ride, Mr. Molesworthy resolved on a bolder experiment than he had hitherto tried. He would probe Clare's meekness to the core. Though their acquaintance had hardly been long enough to justify it, he "popped the question." He was curious to see how she would take it.

Clare heard him with neither blush nor smile; but said, looking serenely up,

"If my love will make you happy, I will accept you."

"But will my love make you happy? I don't want any pale altar victim."

"I only think of how I can please you, my darling. What matters my individual bliss? A woman's life is all for another."

It did not occur to Mr. Molesworthy that in this speech Clare had travestied his opinions. One other experiment remained.

Our friend Hiram had a vague idea. Ladies were very particular about their *trousseau*, and required quite a long time to get up a wardrobe satisfactory to female eyes.

"If I were to be married," he said, "it would suit my business better to have the wedding take place in a couple of weeks. Will it be agreeable to you?"

Clare cast down her eyes and seemed to reflect. "It is a short time," she replied, "but I daresay I can manage it. One can get whatever one wishes in a city, and here it is not so. I could not think of my convenience for one moment in comparison to your wishes."

After this tender speech, a fond pressure of the hand, or a fervent kiss might have been expected, but Mr. Molesworthy looked as if should he make any demonstrations they would be anything but caresses. He leaned back in the carriage, and plunged into a sulky reverie.

A few minutes passed, then a light laugh awoke him to consciousness.

"Mr. Molesworthy, the farce is played through, I would not carry a jest to such lengths as to marry a man while he was in ignorance of my true character. There should be no deceptions in matrimony. I overheard the remark you made to your cousin, Mrs. Rochover, and in the spirit of mischief I concluded to do a little masquerading. I am not the meek, spiritless thing I have appeared, but I like my own way decidedly better than I like that of any one else. You may withdraw your proposals, sir; they were made under a mistake."

"But I don't want to withdraw them," said our hero, with a bewildered air.

"You must;" and the pretty mouth wore an expression of determination foreign to the meek, quiet lady of a short time before.

"Forgive me, if I have hurt your feelings, Mr. Molesworthy. Perhaps I have done wrong in practicing this upon you. Are you implacable?" And Clare looked really contrite. When she parted from him at his cousin's door, Miss Bravedon offered Mr. Molesworthy her hand, with a pleading glance that might have softened a far harder heart than that which beat in our friend Hiram's bosom.

Like all who have ever tried the experiment, Clare found "it is dangerous to play with edged tools." She had become more interested in the victim of her jest than she was conscious of. Mr. Molesworthy, too, although he now shunned his late ideal, was haunted by her idea, which is about as bad as being in love.

For awhile after the episode of the carriage ride, Miss Bravedon and Mr. Molesworthy saw little of each other; the result of a deliberate plan. But it is useless to try to avoid those whose lives are destined to mingle with our own. Meet we must.

Again, like a star of some magnitude, astronomers might determine what. Mr. Molesworthy arose on Miss Bravedon's horizon.

Clare was no weather prophet, or, at least, did not exercise her faculties that way; and one day, when the sky said rain as plainly as a sky could, she started out in all the bravery of a love of a new bonnet, to do some shopping. Scarcely had she traversed the length of one street, when down came the malignant rain-drops.

Just then, like a ministering angel, with an umbrella, loomed up our friend Hiram. I don't know that it is the popular belief angels carry umbrellas, but they ought, if they make their appearance in wet weather.

Clare was unwilling to be indebted to Mr. Molesworthy for even a trifling courtesy; but pride must be sacrificed, for the sake of her darling bonnet.

Now two persons walking under one umbrella, cannot well play at the stiff game; the proximity is too close.

In spite of the strongest resolutions to the contrary, our friends soon found themselves back on the old terms.

"It's no use struggling with fate, Clare; I cannot give you up."

"But I am very different from your ideal; you want a meek, obedient wife; and I tell you honestly I can never be that."

"Ah! Clare, I might have stood out, forgetting my requirements once; but when we are in love we let everything go, but the beloved object itself."

"I know not, I care not,
If rule's in thy heart,
I know that I love thee,
Whatever thou art."

Not long since I had the curiosity to visit the Molesworthys, and see which had won in the contest for headship. I found, like a good many other foolish, married people, they were so dreadfully in love, they had but one mind between them.

So when Hiram said, "My dear, let us have some fried oysters or green turtle soup for dinner," Clare followed suit, and cried,

"By all means, my love; what can be better?"

Some years ago, it happened that a gentleman was one of a committee upon whom devolved the appointment to certain Custom House places in a neighboring city. He attended patiently to all claimants, until at last one presented himself whom he did not recognize. "Well, what have you done for the party, my man?" he asked the applicant. "Sir," was the indignant reply, "for the last half dozen years I've done all the dirty work for the party in ——," mentioning a neighboring town, which shall be nameless here. "Sir," rejoined Mr. ——, with an equal show of earnestness, "you shall be rewarded—you shall receive the first dirty office which I have to give away."

☞ Mystery magnifies danger, as the fog the sun; the hand that unnerved Belshazzar derived its most horrifying influence from the want of a body; and death itself is not formidable in what we know of it, but in what we do not.

AUTUMN.

Autumn is dying, alas! Sweet Autumn is near
to her death;
All through the night may be felt her languid
scented breath
Coming and going in gasps long-drawn by the
shivering trees,
Out on the misty moors, and down by the dew-
drenched leas.

Autumn is dying, alas! Her face grows pallid
and gray,
The healthy flush of her prime is momently
fading away;
And her sunken cheeks are streaked with a
feverish hectic red,
As she gathers the falling leaves, and piles
them about her bed.

Autumn is dying, alas! Her bosom is rifled
and bare;
Gone is the grain and the fruit, and the flowers
out of her hair,
Whilst her faded garment of green is blown
about in the lanes,
And her ancient lover, the Sun looks coldly
down on her pains.

Autumn is dying, alas! She lies forlorn and
alone;
The little chorusing birds have a broken unhappy
tone
As they fly in a crowd to the hedge when the
evening mists arise,
To curtain the bed of death, and shadow the
closing eyes.

Autumn is dying, alas! But to-night the silent
cloud,
Dropping great tears of rain, will come and
make her a shroud,
Winding it this way and that, tenderly round
and round,
Then catch her away in its arms from the damp
unwholesome ground.

Autumn is dead, alas! Why alas? All her
labor is done;
Perfected, finished, complete, 'neath the wind,
and the rain, and the sun:
All the earth is enriched—the garners of men
run o'er;
There is food for man and beast, and the
stranger that begs at the door.

Look to thy life, oh, man! Swiftly approaches
the night;
Whatsoever thy hand finds to do, do it with all
thy might.
Labor right on to the end: let thy works go
forth abroad;
Then turn thy face to the sky, and enter the
"joy of thy Lord."

MILDRED HOWARD:

OR,

THE OCTOBER MOON.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY THE AUTHOR OF "EDITH BOLTON."

CHAPTER I.

"You will not?"

"Lewis, I cannot!"

"Then, Mildred, remember, my fate—it may be, my blood—is on your soul."

"Oh, Lewis! my brother, my precious brother! unsay those dreadful words. Listen to me—in mercy listen to me!"

But it was too late; even as he had uttered the last word, he had torn himself from her clinging arms, and dashed into the woods at her side. She sprang to her feet and dashed after him, but the clear rays of a bright October moon were at that moment obscured by a passing cloud; and when it rolled away, she realized that she was alone. Sinking on her knees, on the rich carpet of moss at her feet, and clasping her hands in mute agony, she raised her tearless eyes to Heaven, those fearful words still ringing in her ear.

Let us look back a little, in order to comprehend the weight of woe which is at this moment pressing so terribly upon her. Mildred and Lewis Howard were the petted and idolized children of the Hon. Philip Howard, of Kentmere, the beautiful country home, where they had lived from childhood—but unfortunately for them, they had lost their mother when Mildred was a baby; and their father refusing to be separated from them, they had grown up, under the charge principally of servants, as his business required frequent and long absences from home. Thus it happened that the errors of youth, which a loving mother's anxious eye might have restrained and corrected, deepened on Lewis's part into the crimes of manhood; and the gentle Mildred found opposition and persuasion alike powerless, to influence him to a different life.

His father awoke to the existing state of things too late to remedy them; and regretted in vain the mistake he had made in his son's education. After paying heavy gambling debts repeatedly, stories had reached him of his son's misconduct, which had induced him to forbid him to enter his doors. And on the night on which our story opens, Mildred had consented to meet him, after the household had retired, at a favorite spot in a distant part of their own grounds.

Although well aware that she had been for some time engaged to Kenneth Raymond, a young man of fine promise, but dependent upon his own exertions at the bar, for support, Lewis Howard hesitated not, with that selfishness which too often is an attendant of other vices, to urge upon his sister to dismiss her present lover, and favor the suit of her devoted admirer, Reginald Arlington, who persisted in persecuting her with his attentions, a man of immense wealth, very doubtful character, and a great friend of her brother's.

Finding it impossible to win a smile from Mildred, this man had resolved to work upon her feelings, through her sisterly affection, knowing her devoted love to Lewis, and had promised the latter, that if he could once obtain for him the right of a brother to assist him, he should be immediately relieved from all pecuniary embarrassments.

It was for this purpose that Lewis had sought the present meeting; and after urging the matter in the strongest possible manner, and harrowing up the feelings of his sister to a state almost bordering upon frenzy, abruptly closed the interview as we have seen, trusting to the effect of his final threat,—to secure his object ultimately.

At a table covered with papers, in a small, dark room, up three flight of stairs, in the busy, bustling town of H——, sits a young man, writing rapidly, as though eager to accomplish some task ere the last rays of light had faded. A knock at the door.

"Come in," he answers, without pausing in his work.

"Ha! here you are, Kenneth! I doubted whether it was worth while to come here out of office-hours; but I suppose 'briefless barristers' work at odd times; is that it?" And the new comer warmly grasped his friend's outstretched hand.

"Why, Harold, when did you turn up? The last man I should have thought of welcoming to H——. When did you arrive?"

"The steamer arrived two weeks ago—but I had business in New York, and am only now on my way home. I leave here in an hour, but had to find you out, first."

Kenneth Raymond and William Harold had been class-mates and warm friends for years; and the absence of the latter in Europe for some months, gave them much to talk over. As Harold rose to go, he said,

"I cannot tell you, Raymond, how glad I am to see you looking so bright."

"Why shouldn't I look bright? I haven't the world's wealth—but I have something better, which you shall hear about some day, when you will give an old friend more than five minutes '*en passant*.'"

Harold looked at him keenly, and then said,

"I am glad that it is not as I had thought!"

"What do you mean? Speak out, Harold; I never understand mysterious allusions. What is 'not as you had thought?'"

"Oh, it is scarcely worth mentioning now; but I used to think, before I sailed, that you were a good deal smitten with that pretty Miss Howard—that Arlington is engaged to, they tell me—and I'm glad it was a mistake, that's all."

"Do you mean to insult me? Did you come here for the express purpose? Is all the world in league against me?" burst from Kenneth, as with flashing eyes, he started up, overturning his inkstand, as he did so, upon his afternoon's work.

Harold looked at him in mute amazement, too much taken aback to offer a word of reply. His silence seemed to give Raymond time to recover himself, more than any direct denial of the charge could have done.

"Forgive me, Harold," he said at length. "I ought to have remembered you could not have meant to wound me; you did not know that Mildred Howard was my own, my priceless treasure; and to hear her name coupled with that of such a double-distilled villain as Reginald Arlington, is more than I can endure calmly. I might not have vented my feelings upon you so strongly, but that it is only the third time this day, *kind* friends have brought the same story to me; and false, utterly false as I know it to be, it rouses me to desperation to hear it whispered."

"You ought to have known me too well, Raymond, to imagine for an instant, that I should have mentioned such a thing to you, had I an idea of your special interest in Miss Howard. I supposed it a mere passing fancy, or more probably, a notion of my own."

"But, Harold, tell me what you did hear? If her name was mentioned to you at all, why, did you not hear the fact of our engagement, which is no secret, instead of this vile slander, for which there is not the faintest shadow of foundation?"

"Oh, as for that, one never can account for rumors, you know. Do not give it a second thought. It is never worth while to repeat all the trash one hears talked. I was foolish to mention it."

"Not so," said Raymond, "I insist upon knowing, as my right, all that you have heard. It is my duty to trace this lie to its source. Do not fear another explosion. I will be calm; only tell me all you know."

"It amounts to very little, after all," said Harold; "and I should not have thought of it again, but from the name attracting me, and making me think of you. I have been staying with Bob Stanley, in New York, since my return; and in talking over matters and things in the small hours, he told me he had just been staying in the neighborhood of Kentmere—spoke of Lewis Howard, and how he had ruined himself; and said what a pity it was that his pretty sister was going to throw herself away on such a wretch as Reginald Arlington."

"What else? Tell me all," said Kenneth, with set lips.

"I expressed surprise, and said that if she had a father I should think he would prevent it. Stanley said—but there's no use in repeating all this—"

"Go on; go on," said Kenneth, bitterly. "I must know all there is to contradict."

"He said that her father had forbidden it, but that she was in the habit of meeting him privately in their own grounds, and—"

"Hush!" said Kenneth, his feelings once more overcoming him. "Dare not to breathe such a foul slander upon one purer than the driven snow. How can you utter such a base, wicked lie? Mildred Howard, bound to me by the most sacred ties, meeting another man in private. Do you know what you are saying?"

"I knew it must pain you to hear it," said Harold, pitying the keen suffering of his friend, "but you would have it."

"Go on," said Kenneth, burying his face in his hands.

"I have nothing more to tell; and indeed, I am more sorry than I can say, that I have said thus much; but I must say good-bye now, if I hope to meet the train."

"Harold," said Kenneth, rising, "do not misunderstand my feelings for one instant. Do not leave me under the impression that I have a shadow of doubt, a feeling of distrust towards Mildred. She is noble, true-hearted, and pure, above suspicion, and high above anything approaching deceit. It only grieves me that her name could ever be made the theme of such a story. I will clear it up instantly; and when I see you again, I hope to have discovered how it could have arisen.

Harold warmly shook his friend's hand, and left him trusting that it might result as he hoped, yet without his friend's perfect confidence that such would be the case.

As Raymond returned to the writing-table, and gathered up his work, (all destroyed by one touch of his hand in his heat and excitement,) he muttered between his clenched teeth, "Base calumny! My darling Mildred, you shall be righted ere this sun goes down. And yet—why did they all say it? Why did they all name his hated name? How could such a story arise? What am I saying? I do not doubt her—God forbid! I could not doubt my own Mildred."

And yet, in spite of his words, he threw him-

self into his chair, and covered his face with his hands, with an air of depression, widely differing from the sanguine one with which he had parted from his friend.

Suddenly starting, however, as though an idea had at that moment struck him, he looked at his watch—locked up his papers, and saying to himself,

"Yes, that will be better," hurriedly left his office.

CHAPTER II.

"I reckon you may turn in, Jerry, there'll be no one to want you so late as this," said the landlord of the "Kentmere Arms," to his ostler, as he proceeded to bar his shutters for the night.

"Not so fast, Master Gregory. I thought so too, a bit ago; but I hear a gallop coming down the road; and to my ears, it sounds like the gallop of Mr. Raymond's 'Prince.'"

"Well done, Jerry; you're more of a fool than I thought you were—and that's a bold word. When ever did Mr. Raymond come at this hour of the night? You know well he comes but for one purpose; and his bird has been tucked in her nest long enough before this."

"I don't know how great a fool I be," muttered Jerry; "but I've sense enough to know a horse's gallop, when I hear it—and that's Mr. Raymond's 'Prince.'"

The disputed point was soon settled, by the hardly taxed "Prince" being suddenly reined up, by his impatient rider, at the door of the well-known inn.

"Here, Jerry," said Kenneth, dashing the reins to him, as he sprung to the ground, "take care of him. I did not know I had ridden him so hard," added he, as he looked at the animal's sides reeking with foam.

"Why, Mr. Raymond, whatever brought you at this hour of the night?" said old Gregory, as he came out to welcome this well-known and frequent guest.

"My own business," said Kenneth, shortly. "Give me a room. I want no supper."

"Ha! that's the game, is it? Got wind of the stories, I suppose, and he's down for a duel with Master Arlington. Well there's one good thing, it 'll bring the 'Arms' into notice anyway. People 'll be sure to come down here to look at the place. 'It's an ill wind,' and so on. Well, well, these young blades are hot-headed chaps; not that I wonder he wants to pay that Arlington back, for Miss Mildred was a proper, sweet young lady, and I don't wonder he can't bear to lose her."

This soliloquy was delivered as the old innkeeper took his way up-stairs to see if everything was in order in the chamber which had come to be known as "Mr. Raymond's room," whilst Kenneth was pacing up and down the sitting-room below with hasty, impatient strides. He had resolved to come down here, and see Mildred for himself, convinced that one glance at that sweet, innocent young face, would dispel every doubt; one tone of that loving voice would set at rest every fear. He had determined to lose no time, but, by starting at once, to reach Kentmere Arms that night, sleep there, and go to Mildred in the early morning. But on going to his room, to which he was presently summoned by Gregory, he found himself in such a state of excitement and tumult, that rest was impossible, and once more hastening downstairs, he started for a walk, trusting that the cool air might calm his heated brain. He walked rapidly on for some time, without noticing whither he was bending his steps, one thought absorbing him wholly, till suddenly, a clock near him, chiming out the hour of twelve, roused him and made him aware that he was close to the little wicket-gate which opened into the woods, at the back of Kentmere.

The grounds extended for some distance; paths running through the woods, which had been cleared from all undergrowth, and supplied here and there with rustic seats. This wood had always been a favorite resort with him when he wanted a quiet walk and talk with Mildred, far more so than the grand and stately old avenue which wound up to the house on the other side, and which was the main entrance. A sudden impulse decided him to enter and seek the spot where they had last walked together. The sharp freshness of the October evening had not been unfelt, and somewhat cooled in body and calmed in mind, he paused to look around him and admire, as he ever did, the marvellous beauty of the scene, but to which the hour lent a peculiar charm. The moon was wading through thick masses of clouds, at one moment obscured, and obscuring the whole landscape, the next bursting forth in that clear, sharply-defined brightness, which seems, at times to give even a more startling consciousness of every object than daylight itself. Thus it came that he reached that spot at the precise time at which our story opens, and the very cloud which had hidden Lewis Howard's retreating form from Mildred's eyes, concealed him from Kenneth's view also, till he suddenly heard the sound of running, and felt some one brush against him and dash onward.

"Ha! who goes there? Stop!" he cried hastily, assured that such rapid flight betokened no good. But, as he turned, the struggling moon showed him a man clearing the wicket-fence at a bound, and darting into a thicket beyond. He stood for an instant as though spell-bound, and ere he had recovered himself sufficiently to think of pursuit, he realized that it was too late. With a sudden rush came all the stories that he had heard, of the secret, forbidden meetings crowding upon his mind, and yet he hated himself even for admitting the thought of them for a moment. This was some thief who had caught the sound of his footsteps as they rustled amid the fallen leaves, and sought to escape detection; and was it possible that such a circumstance could have made him doubt his Mildred? He was unworthy of her pure, true love, if he could harbor such an idea. Thus trying to reassure himself, he wanders on to reach the favorite point; but what causes that sudden, terrible start? What sight freezes his blood in his veins, as he puts his hand to his brow, to satisfy himself that he is not dreaming? Oh, treacherous moon, why do you choose this moment to betray her with your brightest beams? Yes, it was true, all too terribly true, for there, upon that well-known carpet of moss, with hands clasped in mute agony, and tearless eyes upraised to Heaven, knelt Mildred Howard, his own, his trusted Mildred. A feeling of sickening horror at this worst confirmation of the stories he had so eagerly denied, came over him, and he stood gazing at her, unable even now to believe in her baseness. So completely absorbed, so wrapt was she in her own terrible sufferings, that she had been entirely unconscious of his approach, and it was not until he sternly pronounced her name, that she sprang to her feet, with a cry of frightened dread.

"Kenneth! oh, Kenneth! is it you?" she said, as soon as fright would let her speak. "Did you meet him? But, oh, you would not tell, you would not tell." And darting towards him, she sought to give him that little hand he was ever so proud to clasp; but now he drew coldly back, and folding his arms, said in his sternest voice:

"Mildred, can this be you? Can you have fallen so low, and having fallen, how can you dare to touch me still?"

To Mildred's pure soul, the thought of the deceit which Lewis had persuaded her to practice, by his imploring entreaties to meet him, coupled with such threats as he had used to-night in case of her refusal, seemed to her all-sufficient ground for Kenneth's anger, and she never dreamed that he could deem her worse than she was; that she had deceived, she knew; and that he, so true, so honest, so clear for the right, could never forgive her, seemed to her only a just punishment for her sin.

She bent before him like a crushed flower. "Forgive me, Kenneth. I have deeply sinned, but, oh! it was for him."

"And this to me? You dare to tell me you have sinned, and for *him*. That is the worst of all, for such a sinful, base, wicked—"

"Hush, Kenneth! hush! I will not hear such words even from you, and I had thought you were too noble to utter them."

"Mildred, are you mad? *Too noble* to speak against the wretch who has deprived me of my happiness, my all! Who has taken from me all that gave life its value, all for which I cared to struggle and to battle in the daily strife, every aim, purpose, hope, and yet, forsooth, I may not breathe a word against him; but I will speak, curse him—"

"Oh, Kenneth! Kenneth! for my sake at least—"

"Mildred, you plead for him, you dare to plead for him to me? You, whom I thought so pure, so stainless; you, bound to me by ties which I, at least, deemed sacred. You do not know the wicked work which you have done; you have implanted doubt of all goodness, all truth, in my soul; you have destroyed my faith in human nature—"

A low cry burst from Mildred's lips, and sinking on her knees, once more she raised a face of such keen agony to Heaven, as might well have touched Kenneth's heart, but his own suffering and bitter disappointment in her truth had steeled him to every softer feeling; and turning to her harshly, he said,

"How dare you pray? You, who know that, at this instant, your very presence here proves that you are acting a deceit to God and man."

"How dare I pray?" she said, starting to her feet, and coming to his side. "Kenneth! I pray because I think God is more merciful than man; because he sees how weak, how frail, I am; how torn, how rent with doubt of what and where right is. I think He knows it is to save another's soul that I came here, and in His reckoning, I think, yes, I do think, He bears in mind I never knew a mother's guiding care, I never felt a sister's sympathizing love. I have been lonely, Kenneth, lonely always, but for you; and if, in the thick darkness which surrounds me now, I may have missed my way, I think that great, vast pity, which our blessed Lord extends to all His children, may reach to me, yes, even to me. Oh, Kenneth, let me pray!"

"Mildred, what words are these? So false, and yet so true; true to your God, and false to me? That cannot be;" and for the first time breaking down, he added, in a choked voice: "Oh, tell me! tell me, even yet, it is not so; yes, even yet, in spite of my very senses, I must believe your truth, if you will say but one little word to tell me it is but some horrible delusion; you have not, you cannot have deceived me."

White shone the moonlight; whiter grew her face; more tightly clenched those small, soft hands; but low and clear came out the words,

"Kenneth! I have deceived! No one on earth knows of this meeting, save the one I came to meet."

"Nay, do not lay that flattering unction to your soul." Said he, the old bitterness returning, "Clandestine meetings are not always the secret affairs young ladies choose to believe them—"

"What, Kenneth! what! you cannot mean—oh, no! it is not known—it cannot be."

"Mildred, what brought me here to-night?"

"Not that, oh, never that?" said she, almost writhing with the agony of the suggestion.

"No, not to play the spy. I had no thought of that; but to have the right from your own lips to give the lie to the base slanders, as I deemed them then, God help me! I have come, and I have had my answer. Henceforth we meet as strangers."

He paused, as though expecting some dissent, some protest against this hard sentence; but the bowed head only bowed lower, the panting breast only heaved more painfully. This was all.

It seemed as though this mute acceptance of his words was more than he could bear.

"And have you nothing, not one word to say? Oh, Mildred, if you loved as I did, you could not part thus. Tell me, even now, that you have been wrong, but that you see your sin; you are young, and, as you say, have known no guiding care; say only you will give him up, and let us bury all this black and bitter past."

Twice she raised her head to speak, but no words came, till with a sudden effort she exclaimed,

"God give me strength to say it. I cannot give him up."

The wind moaned through the trees, and swept the leaves from before her feet, as though typifying the bare, desolate path of her future life.

"I am answered," said he, bowing coldly. "Fool that I was, to trust to woman's love!" Then, turning to her with a formal air, he added:

"Miss Howard, will you permit me to see you home? I cannot leave you here."

She raised her eyes to his with a look of deep, unutterable, and hopeless woe; but rose silently and strove to walk. For an instant it seemed that her powers failed her, and she caught at the rustic seat behind her, but the next moment she rallied, and walked calmly on at his side. He proffered no hand to help her, offered no word as they pursued the path, overhung with meeting branches which had listened to so many whispered words of love in former happy meetings. As they reached the back door, Mildred paused, and turning to Raymond, with a gentle pleading in her tone, said:

"Kenneth, say only you forgive me!"

"Excuse me, Miss Howard, you have made your choice. I have no more to say."

THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

NEW LIFE, TALENT AND ENERGY.

SPLENDID ARRAY OF CONTRIBUTORS.

UNSURPASSED AND UNSURPASSABLE.

MRS. BELLA Z. SPENCER having purchased an interest in THE SATURDAY EVENING POST, and Mr. EDMUND DEACON having retired from the paper, THE POST passes into the management of a NEW FIRM, who are determined to infuse FRESH LIFE, TALENT and ENERGY into its columns. The popular novelist,

EMERSON BENNETT,

Author of "Prairie Flower," "The Refugees," "Clara Moreland," &c., &c.

has been engaged, at a great expense, as a regular contributor, and will

WRITE EXCLUSIVELY FOR THE POST.

Mr. Bennett will begin a continued story in the first number of the New Year. It will be called

THE PHANTOM OF THE FOREST;

A TALE OF THE BACKWOODS.

This story will run through from twelve to fifteen numbers, and be a story of the early settlement of Kentucky, including adventures with the Indians in that romantic region which was generally called by the pioneers of civilization, "the dark and bloody ground."

THE POST will be edited by Mrs. BELLA Z. SPENCER, who will also contribute a continued story in the course of the year, entitled

GENEVIEVE HOWE.

Our columns will be further supplied with original contributions by the following

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Author of "Thanatopsis" and other Poems.
FLORENCE PERCY,
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☞ Editors inserting the above, or condensing the material portions of it for their columns, shall be entitled to an exchange by mailing us a marked copy.

"My choice?" echoed Mildred, "oh say rather my sore, sore necessity."

"We will not re-open the subject, if you please. Allow me to bid you good evening," and he once more bowed formally as the door closed upon her.

Was he in reality so cold and hard as he appeared? Follow him at this moment, watch him return to the spot they have just left, see him dash himself upon that moss, still dented by her light pressure, and mark the dry, convulsive sobs which shake and tear his frame, and know they prove how she had wound herself around the very fibres of his heart, which seemed as though it could but break in the undoing.

CHAPTER III.

"Well, Mr. Raymond," said a gentleman, as he entered the office the next morning where Kenneth was seated writing rapidly, "it is a pleasure to come to one place where you are never disappointed. You have my translation all ready for me, I know, without asking."

"I regret to say, Mr. Strong, that it is not ready for you. I was called out of town yesterday afternoon on important business, and was therefore unable to complete it."

"Indeed!" said Mr. Strong, with an air of much disappointment. "I thought I could depend upon you, and now you have lost me this steamer; you know, too, how important it was; my friend leaves in an hour, and I explained to you that it could not be trusted to the mail."

"The steamer does not sail till to-morrow," said Raymond, "I will engage to have it completed before the midnight train, take it on then, and place it in your friend's own hands. This is all I can do to atone for a delay which it was impossible to prevent."

"Oh, Mr. Raymond, that is asking too much. I could not permit that. But," said he, for the first time observing him, "you are ill. Why did you not tell me so at once. Go home, man, and go to bed—let my papers alone. I suppose the world will continue to revolve, even if they should not reach England by this steamer."

"Excuse me, Mr. Strong, I am perfectly well, and insist upon carrying out my plan. Your friend shall have the papers before the steamer sails."

"Perfectly well, with such a face. No! no! I know the world better than that. There are other things beside disease that knock a man down. Got into difficulties, eh? Well, I was young once myself, and can excuse that sort of thing. Make me your banker, and say no more about it," and the kind hearted old man drew out his pocket-book.

"Thank you very much, Mr. Strong," said Kenneth, touched by his ready kindness, "but I have no need whatever of money. I have no debts of any kind."

"Good for you. Well, if you won't let me help you, you won't; and if you are bent on going on yourself with those papers, I'll drop in it is afternoon and arrange matters with you." So saying, he rose and left the office.

To Kenneth it was a relief to have some duty which helped him to drown thought, and required careful and incessant application in order to complete his task in time, and yet even this work had its sting, for he could not fail to remember with what pleasure he had accepted the work, promising, as it did, large remuneration, for was not all work done for her? Did not each day's labor bring him nearer to the desired goal, the hour when he could offer Mildred a home, and have a right to call her his own? And now—for what was he toiling—for what was he striving? The contrast well-nigh crushed him to the earth.

So the weary days went by, and crept into months, and no word came to him of Mildred. He devoted himself more and more to business, and it seemed to him that a perverse fate brought happy chances and fortunate circumstances to him just when they had lost all attraction for him. He had increased his income far more during the last few months than in the years before, when he had strained every nerve to win name and fame, for one dearer to him than his own life, and now it seemed suddenly to have come, when he felt inclined to turn from it, and reject it all, as of no avail.

Autumn had deepened into winter; happy hearts had hung their Christmas garlands on church and home; and the pale, pure snow seemed striving to hide all earth's sins and stains beneath the mantle of its own fair charity. A bright, cold morning came, and with it a hard duty for Kenneth, from which he fain would have shrunk. This was to take the testimony of a man who was confined to his house by illness. He had been asked to do it by his faithful friend, Mr. Strong, and promised instantly, without knowing till afterwards that his residence was in the neighborhood of Kentmere, the last spot to which he would willingly have turned his steps, and yet the only one from which his heart was never away.

The air was sharp and bracing, the atmosphere clear and sparkling, the icicles hung in long crystal pendants from the eaves of the houses, the crisp, frozen snow crackled beneath the hoofs of Raymond's favorite, our old friend, "Prince," as he seemed to recognize the old road, once so familiar, now, alas! never travelled. Each tree and bush had its own special memory for Kenneth, but he could not trust himself to think; he had a duty, and he pressed forward to perform it. He reached the house, executed his task, and once more setting out on his homeward way, threw the reins on his horse's neck, and gave himself up to bitter meditation. Almost before he realized where he was, he found himself once more upon the road winding past the little wicket gate at the entrance of Kentmere, and with a flash the whole scene was again before him—that night—his walk, his encounter with his hated rival—and later, the sight of Mildred—her agony—her—but, no! he dared not think of her—so pure, so angelic she still seemed to him. Oh! even yet might it not be some cruel mystery which time would clear up?—and he had been so hard and stern. Perhaps more gentleness might have reclaimed her. *Reclaimed!* That could not be the word for Mildred, no! not even with all he knew, he could not use that word for her. A deep sigh burst from his heart's depths, and as though in answer, a low groan fell on his ear. He started, and listened, but all was still. "The echo of my thoughts." He said, "It is a woodland wail for our lost happiness." He had reached just the point where he had seen the man clear the low wicket fence and dash into the wood beyond, when, from that very thicket once again he heard that groan clearer and longer than before. In an instant he had sprung from his horse, and throwing his rein around a tree, plunged into the thick wood before him. For a short distance the heavy undergrowth impeded his progress, and made it difficult to advance; but as he proceeded it became clearer, and he again heard the sound which had first arrested him. Following the direction from which it seemed to come, he started, as he saw before him, stretched upon the ground a man from whose breast trickled, drop by drop, the small red stream which takes life in its flow. He hurried forward, but as he knelt beside him he started back, exclaiming,

"Not Lewis. Lewis Howard! can it be you?"

The dying man slowly unclosed his eyes, and even in their failing light Kenneth saw that he was recognized. He gently loosened his dress, and pillowed his head upon his arm; and as he looked around for help, saw in the distance a woman approaching from a neighboring cottage with a jug of water.

"He isn't dead, sir, not dead!" she said as she approached, "my husband and me found him here in the wood, and we thought he was dead, and he's gone for the officers of justice, whatever they call 'em, and he telled me to watch him, and all of a sudden he gave a groan, and I went to fetch him a little water. Could he drink, sir, do you think?"

Kenneth took the water, bathed his brow, and moistened his lips. He rallied, but it was evidently only for the moment. He signed to Kenneth to lend his ear to his lips.

"Take care of *her*, and tell her, oh, Kenneth, tell her it was no fault of hers; I left her with—"

He paused for breath, and Kenneth held the water to his lips.

"Lewis," he said, "say nothing that is needless, tell me only who has done this thing?"

"I must, I must," he said, rousing and raising himself, "for her I must. That night—that dreadful night I met you in the wood—"

"You, Lewis, you?" burst forth from Kenneth's lips. "Oh, was it you who passed me in the wood?" A light seemed suddenly to dawn upon him, a hope, a trust that Mildred might yet be his.

"Yes, yes, you know it was. No matter now. But tell her my blood is not upon her soul. I said it would be. It was his act, and not for her—no, not for her, but tell her—I ask her pardon with my dying breath. I would have come between you, Kenneth—your pardon too—and given her to that wretch, that basest wretch, who dealt this fatal wound. Tell her I never knew his vileness until now—bless her that she was true to you; that sin is spared my soul. Cherish her tenderly, she is an angel, and I have brought her only pain."

The earth seemed reeling beneath Kenneth's feet, as by degrees, through Lewis's broken words, came to him the fact that Mildred's deepest sin had been her yielding to his wish to meet her in the wood, and this, her one deceit. How did her words, all now made clear, rush back upon his mind, "and if in the thick darkness which surrounds me now I may have missed my way, I think that great, vast pity, which our blessed Lord extends to all His children may reach to me; yes, even to me." Ah, well for her, thought he; she had that pity and that love to cling to, for he who should have pitied, and who should have loved, had failed her in the hour of her utmost need. But, even for such thoughts, this was no time, and turning once more to Lewis, whose breath came fainter and fainter, he said, "Lewis, dear Lewis, let me say a prayer. Remember, even now, your Saviour can forgive; oh join with me in asking Him."

Lewis lifted his trembling hands, and clasping them together, murmured "Forgive me, Lord, forgive—"

Kenneth clearly and distinctly repeated the prayer for the dying, and ere it had closed he saw a slight spasm pass over his face, and knew that Lewis Howard had gone to await his final account at the dread judgment day.

CHAPTER IV.

"Tell Mr. Howard I must see him at once," said Kenneth Raymond to the servant who answered the loud peal of the Kentmere door bell.

"Mr. Howard is away, sir, left home this morning."

Kenneth hesitated for a moment—there was no time to be lost. He had only waited to give directions to have Lewis's body brought to his home ere he hastened on to break the dreadful tidings to his father, and he must act promptly, and so as most carefully to spare Mildred.

"Send Adams to me then in the library," said he, and the servant made way for him in surprise, as he walked past him to the well known room. As he reached the door he turned, saying,

"On no account mention to Miss Howard that I am here."

The servant, who was a stranger, and in the months which had elapsed had never seen Raymond's face within these walls, marvelled at the air of authority with which he spoke, and most of all at his direction to send Adams to him. Adams was an old and faithful housekeeper, who had been at once nurse, guardian and companion to the children from the time of their mother's death, and who had come to be regarded in virtue of this office, and her advancing years as a person of much consequence in the family. She had somewhat presumed upon her privileges, and was accustomed to express her feelings in no measured terms, especially when anything displeased her with regard to her darlings, Mildred and Lewis, for whom alone she cared to live, every thought, aim and purpose of her being apparently centering in them.

Kenneth had felt very sure of not meeting Mildred, when he named the library as the place of meeting, for he remembered well her habit of studying at this hour in her own bright morning-room, where she could be undisturbed. He entered fearlessly therefore, and not until he had advanced several steps into the room did his eye fall upon a large arm-chair near the window, where, supported by pillows, and languidly resting upon them, sat the form, which he, at once, most longed and most dreaded to see.

Fair at all times, her extreme pallor at present, as she lay, with her soft, golden curls, tangled over the pillow on which she rested, gave her an air of almost spiritual loveliness, and Kenneth stood, rooted to the spot, almost as though he had seen a vision from another world.

Mildred gave a quick, sudden start as he entered; the blood rushed over face, brow and neck, then as quickly faded, leaving her paler than before. For one moment, she hesitated as though at a loss how to act—the next, she said, with quiet dignity:

"There must be some mistake, Mr. Raymond. You could not have intended to intrude upon me here."

Her words first waked Kenneth to a sense of their relative positions. In the absorbing thought of the horror which he had to communicate, he had lost sight of the fact, that he had voluntarily deprived himself of all right to enter those doors, and that his presence there must appear, as Mildred evidently viewed it, an unwarrantable intrusion. With man's usual self-complacency, he had jumped to the conclusion, that, his doubt of Mildred once removed, nothing remained but for him to assure her of that fact, and, whilst blaming himself for his want of trust, atone for it by establishing the old relations between them. This fair, mental edifice, so rapidly raised, crumbled to its foundation at the sound of her words, and he realized at once, the barrier between them, a barrier which it must rest with her to remove, or to declare that it should remain impassable for ever. Unconsciously his respect rose as his hopes fell, and never had he longed so passionately to call her his own as at this instant, when she seemed passing from his grasp.

"Excuse me, Miss Howard, I know that I have no right here—" he began, then—as the full horror of his tidings flashed upon him—breaking down utterly, he cried: "Oh, Mildred, Mildred, forgive me! forget the past, and only let let me help you in this dreadful hour—"

She started from her chair, sprang forward, and seizing his arm, gave him one keen, searching glance, as though she would read him through and through.

"I knew it! Yes, I knew it," she said, her voice rising almost to a shriek; "Lewis! and I have killed him. His blood is on my soul, he said it, and it is true."

"No, Mildred, no! His last words were to tell you it was not your act," said Kenneth, forgetting in his eagerness to give her comfort all that he thus implied.

"His *last* words? *Last* words, did you say? Then he *is* dead;" and suddenly relaxing her hold, ere Kenneth could catch her, she fell heavily to the ground. Tenderly, most tenderly he raised her, and bearing her to the sofa, knelt beside her, and supported her upon his breast, lavishing upon her every fond, endearing name. But, alas! they fell upon an unheeding ear.

At this instant the door opened, and Adams appeared. No matter what her private sentiments may have been, no surprise was permitted to show itself, as she walked to the foot of the sofa, and looking grimly at Raymond, said:

"Next door to killed her, first, by neglect, and now come to finish your work by a start. I'll be bound you came in without giving her any warning."

"I did not know Miss Howard had been ill. How long since she was taken?" said poor Kenneth in bitter self-reproach.

"Oh! not long! not long as some folks count time, a matter of three months or so;—only since last October; only people do die in shorter time than that, and hearts will break, even in three months time. She's done for now, I reckon; the doctor said any excitement would be fatal."

"Did he say that? Oh, did he? Then I have killed her. Mildred, my own, my precious one!" and bowing his head upon those marble hands, his strong frame shook with heavy sobs.

Adams was frightened at her work. She did not know what Kenneth knew—of what a fearful shock had come to Mildred, and anxious that he should suffer for his supposed neglect, to which she had attributed her darling's illness, she had used the doctor's words of months ago, to suit her present purpose, little calculating upon their terrible effect. She strove hurriedly to re-assure him.

"Don't take on so, Mr. Raymond—she'll look up soon, she often takes these fainting fits, now she's so weak, sweet lamb. Look here!" and taking a scent-bottle from her pocket, she held it to Mildred, who, after a few long breaths, slowly unclosed her eyes, but without giving any sign of recognition to poor Kenneth, who bent eagerly over her.

"Mildred, my own treasure, will you not speak to me? Will you not look at your own Kenneth?"

"Kenneth!" she said, slowly and dreamily, "Kenneth! He comes to me in dreams, and we are happy, but never save in dreams. I was so wicked, yes, so very wicked, he could not love me any more. I think God has forgiven me, but Kenneth never will—no, Kenneth never will!"

"That's bad!" said Adams, "wandering again; that's just the way she talked for weeks and weeks—words that had no meaning to them. She, wicked! Innocent love, if she's wicked, God help the rest of the world."

"Adams," said Kenneth, hastily, "you must know the truth. I came with the worst news. I cannot tell you now in her presence. Half through my awkwardness, and half through her own anxiety she learned the dreadful fact, without preparation. No wonder that it has upset her reason for the time. But there is no time to be lost. She must be taken to her room at once, out of the reach of sounds which might distress her. Ask me nothing till I see her cared for. Is her room still in the western wing?"

Adams uttered no word, made no reply. She stood as though turned into stone, her large gray eyes fixed on him, with a cold, glassy stare, her tall, gaunt figure looking taller and sterner from the rigidity of her whole attitude; but no sound came. He knew not how long this would last, or how it might result, and determined to place Mildred in safety at once. Turning to her, therefore, he said very gently:

"Mildred, my darling, do you remember those long-ago days, when you had been so ill, and I came each day to carry you down stairs? You used to say then that no one carried you so safely and so tenderly as I—and now I am going to try it again, and take you to your own room to rest. Put that little arm round my neck, and rest that dear head on this shoulder, will you not, Mildred?"

She fixed her soft blue eyes on him, with a puzzled look of wonder, and gradually an expression of pain came over her face.

"Was there not something terrible?" she said, putting her hand in his. "Is Kenneth angry with me? Lewis! Oh! was it Lewis, tell me?"

Kenneth dreaded the waking of memory, in her present weak state, and taking the hand which clasped his, he passed it around his neck, and lifted her gently from the sofa. She made no opposition but nestled her fair head on his breast, and as her soft curls pressed against his cheek, they were wet with the tears which he had no power to restrain.

Slowly, and as if in a dream, Adams moved after them, as though where her darling went, there she must follow. On and on they went, through the wide hall, and up the broad oaken staircase, across a corridor, and into Mildred's own bright, sunny room, where each and every article spoke of refinement and of taste.

Gently he laid her down on a soft cushioned couch, and as he loosed that closely clinging arm she said:

"Ah! do not wake me, nurse! 'Twas such a happy dream. I thought I was with Kenneth, and he smiled as in the dear old days. He knew that I was wicked, he knew I had deceived him, yet he forgave me, nurse! Yes, he forgave me, dearest Kenneth! I never dreamed that dream before."

Kenneth knelt at her side, and sobbed aloud.

"Look up, sweet lamb!" said Adams. "He is here, your Mr. Raymond's here."

"Hush! hush!" said Kenneth, starting up. "Do not try to rouse her; it is a merciful oblivion for the time."

Not even to pour out to her his agony of self-reproach, to tell her of his strong, undying love, would he risk hastening upon her all the woe that waited her, when consciousness should come. Slowly and gradually he broke the dreadful details of that morning's work to Adams, who listened with strained eyes and clenched hands, but with no other outward expression, for her darling's sake.

When the sad tale was finished, they saw that Mildred, exhausted by the motion, had fallen into a soft, calm sleep, and Kenneth, pressing one kiss upon that precious brow, hastened to the performance of all the sad duties which this day had so strangely imposed upon him.

CHAPTER V.

The rolling year, which steadily revolves, whether our hearts be glad or grave, happy or heavy, has brought us to autumn tide once more. Once more, the rich, red leaves dance in the bright October sun, or join the winds at play, with toss and whirl and dash, in many mad career. Sad hearts at Kentmere suffered still; but though Mr. Howard had used every effort, no trace of Reginald Arlington could be discovered. His disappearance just at this time, together with Lewis's words, established the fact of his guilt, but the manner and immediate cause which led to it, with all the circumstances connected with it, necessarily remained wrapped in silence and darkness. A severe illness had followed the shock which Mildred had received, in her weakened state, and months of prostration and languor had ensued.

Before bidding adieu, however, to those, at whose lives we have been looking, let me with a writer's privilege, bear my readers with me, to the deck of one of our fine ocean steamers, well termed "floating palaces," where every luxury seems combined, which considerate care and thoughtfulness can suggest.

Look at the brilliant hues of that glorious sunset, crimson and purple and floating amber, mingling with the deep green of the ocean waves, as they seem to rise and fall in steady swell against those glowing masses of color. Who that has watched a sunset at sea can ever forget the marvellous fascination of the sight? The passengers evidently share our feeling, for look how they are grouped here and there in little knots, gazing at the wonderfully beautiful scene before them. But all fair things on earth must have an end, and so the sun sinks, the bright tints fade into sober, sombre gray, and one by one the various groups scatter and seek more material enjoyment in a warm and brightly-lighted cabin. Let them go. We care not to follow them, for to us they are all unread books. We should rather watch that couple, where the gentleman so carefully spreads that large buffalo robe upon the deck, and places those cushions so comfortably for that sweet-looking girl at his side. What a child-like face! Can she be his wife? She looks too young for that. Is there an unreal loveliness given to her by the soft light of the young moon just rising, or can she be actually as exquisite as she looks, with those soft curls tossing in the breeze? We must wait for the daylight to decide that point. But listen. They seem to forget that although there may be no one in sight, there are often invisible ears, catching their words.

"Tears, Mildred? Tears in those precious eyes, when I am so happy, so very, very happy? You do not grieve that you have trusted all to me? You would not have it changed, my darling?"

"Oh, Kenneth! you know my heart too well to ask me that;" she said, putting her hand in his, and resting her lovely head upon his shoulder, as he sat beside her. "But I cannot put this great wide ocean between me and all Life's past, without some sad regrets, some mournful memories."

"I know it, dearest Mildred; but you must look forward now; bright days, I trust, are in store—and we will take our new life up, in trust and hope. Look what a lovely night it is! How calm that moon looks down! Take that for a bright omen of peace and love."

She shivered as she sat.

"What! cold, my darling? Mildred, you must go down;" and as he speaks, he wraps her shawl, with tender care, around her slight form.

"Oh, no! not cold, dear Kenneth, but—it is so wrong. I know—I cannot bear the October moon." And the sweet head bows lower on his breast, and tears are raining from her eyes.

How tenderly he clasps her in his arms; and pushing back her tangled hair, presses a kiss upon her brow.

"How could I be so thoughtless, precious one? But, Mildred, that moon speaks to me, with more pain than it can ever do to you. Not this one only—but each one, as it has waxed and waned, since first I knew all that my wicked doubt had brought on you, has come to me, laden with a deep lesson. Your sin, (for such I must consider it, ever, for any cause, for any purpose, to forsake the strictest line of truth, to lead yourself, for any reason, to any form of deceit,) was light, compared with mine. You yielded to entreaties, and did evil, hoping—too common error—that the good would come; whilst I gave way to passion and distrust most sinful. I doubted one whose purity I knew—I well nigh broke the heart of one—"

"Hush, hush, dear Kenneth! you will break it now. Please never, never say such words."

"Then let me say some other words, my own sweet wife. The past is gone—the present, in our hands. Let us resolve to take up life together, in earnestness and love. Let us resolve that, come what may, we will be true—true to ourselves, and true to God, with mutual love, and mutual trust, and mutual charity for every fault. Let us ask God to aid us. And, Mildred, let this October moon, bear witness to our vow, so that, in place of those dark, haunting memories, each coming one, may bring up this dear night, when we sat side by side. Look up, my own! Smile on me, in its soft, clear light, to tell me you agree."

She raised her trusting eyes to his; and, midst her tears, like the bright Bow of hope, broke forth, a sweet, soft, sunny smile.

"God helping me, dear Kenneth! I will keep that vow."

And the October moon looked down.

THE MARKETS.

FLOUR AND MEAL—The Flour market is dull. The week's sales only reach some 8,000 bbls, mostly taken by the trade, at $7,75@8,00 for superfine, and $8,50@9 for extras; $8,50@9,75 for Spring Wheat family; $10@11,50 for red Wheat do; and $12@13 for white Wheat fancies. Rye Flour is dull, at $7,25@7 ℔ bbl. Buckwheat Meal—Sales at $5@5,12 the 100 lbs.

GRAIN—There is not much Wheat offering. Sales 25,000 bus, at 240@240 for common and prime reds, and 260@270c for white. Rye—Sales at 109@110c for Delaware, and 110@120c for Pennsylvania. Corn—Sales 40,000 bus are reported at 86@87c for new, and 85@90c for old yellow. Oats—27,000 bus sold at 50@51 for Southern and Pennsylvania.

PROVISIONS—There is very little doing in the Hog product; dressed Hogs are quoted at $13@14 the 100 lbs; Mess Pork is offered at $32@33 ℔ bbl. Of Beef about 200 bbls Western Mess sold at $14@15 ℔ bbl. Beef Hams are held at $42. Lard is offered at 24@25c. Butter ranges at 28 to 38c for common to prime packed and roll, and 40@55c for choice lots—the latter for fine Goshen. Cheese is firm at 17@19½c for Ohio and New York state. Eggs are selling at 38@39c ℔ doz.

COTTON—The week's sales reach about 800 bales at from 45 to 54c for low and good middlings.

BARK—Sales 100 hhds 1st No 1 Quercitron at $32½ ℔ ton. Tanners' Bark is quiet.

BEESWAX is rather dull at 42@50c ℔ lb.

COAL—Business is dull for the season. Prices are unsettled and lower, ranging at $5@9 ℔ ton on board at Richmond.

COFFEE—Sales Rio at 29@33c ℔ lb.

FEATHERS continue dull at 90@92c ℔ lb.

FRUIT—Green Apples are dull at $5@6 ℔ bbl. Cranberries range at $10@15 ℔ bbl. Dried Fruit—Apples sell at 13@16c, and Peaches at 25@35c ℔ lb, as to quality.

HAY is selling at $14@17 ℔ ton.

HOPS are selling at 35@65c for old and new.

LUMBER is without much change and a moderate business to note at $22@24 for White Pine; $19@20 for Yellow Sap Boards, and $18@19 ℔ M for Rafted Hemlock.

OILS—Petroleum—Sales 9000 bbls, chiefly refined in bond, at 65@67c. Free Oil at 83@86c; and Crude at 39@40c.

PLASTER—Soft is worth $4 ℔ ton.

SEEDS—There is a good demand for prime Cloverseed at $8@8,25. Other kinds range at $7@7,75 ℔ bus. Flaxseed—Sales at $3,15@3,20 ℔ bus.

WOOL—The market is dull, with a small business to note at 60@70c for medium and fine, the latter for choice clips; 60@65c for tub, and 50@55c for low Wools.

PHILADELPHIA CATTLE MARKETS.

The supply of Beef Cattle during the past week amounted to about 2500 head. The prices realized from 16@17 cts ℔ lb, 80 Cows brought from $40 to $5 ℔ head. Sheep—4000 head were disposed of at from 7@7½c ℔ lb. 450 Hogs sold at from $15,00 @16,50 ℔ 100 lbs.

Theory of Medicated Inhalation.

COLDS, CATARRH, AND CATARRHA—LETTER II.

To the Editors of the Sat. Eve. Post.

GENTLEMEN:—In considering the causes which gradually undermine the strength of the lungs and produce consumption, we shall begin with *colds*, as these are, of all causes, the most important. When we are exposed to *wet feet*, to drafts of air, to sleeping in damp sheets, or to insufficient clothing, a sense of *chilliness* is experienced, followed by oppression of some of the organs of the body. This is a *cold*. It may be slight and soon pass off, or severe and end in inflammation. Much depends on the importance of the part on which it falls, for a cold always manifests itself in some organ, and any organ may be its seat.

We distinguish colds by the part affected. Hence we have a *cold in the head*, or influenza, a *cold in the nose*, or catarrh; a *cold in the throat*, or quinsy; a *cold in the chest*, or bronchitis.

By a *catarrh* is meant a congested and inflamed condition of the mucous membrane lining the nostrils, generally produced by colds, but often caused by dust and other irritating matters in the air. We breathe through the nose, hence its mucous membrane is more liable to injury than any other part from sudden changes in the temperature of the air, and from irritating impurities floating in it. In nine cases out of every ten the first indication of our having taken cold is *a sense of stuffing in the nose*. The mucous membrane swells until it completely closes the passage. This is *acute catarrh*, of all affections the most common and the least regarded. Most persons have two or three such attacks every year, but rarely think it necessary to do anything for its removal.

Chronic catarrh follows the *acute* form, and is the direct consequence of leaving a *simple cold in the head* to cure itself. After a longer or shorter time the patient finds that, although the difficulty of breathing through the nose has passed off, there still remains a slight discharge of *yellow mucus*. This is *chronic* catarrh—On looking into the nose we now find the membrane thickened, redder than in health, and often ulcerated. Chronic catarrh occurs in several forms. In the simplest form we have merely an accumulation of *yellow* or *straw-colored* mucus in the posterior nares above and behind the palate, which the patient *hawks* out from time to time during the day. In the *second*, small sores form in the nose, and the secretion becomes dry, requiring frequent attention to keep it free. In the *third*, a false membrane forms in the nostrils, which the patient removes from time to time. Not unfrequently this membrane is bloody where it has been torn from points of *ulceration* within the nose. In the *fourth*, the secretion is thin, and drops down into the throat whenever the patient throws back the head, or forcibly *snuffs* up the air. When the ulcerations are considerable, the secretion becomes *purulent*. There is, too, often *loss of smell*, and, when the ulceration has eaten through the membrane to the bone, the discharge has an *offensive odor*.

Catarrh occurs at all ages, being found in young children and in old age. Those suffering from it are much more liable to take cold on slight exposure. It is much worse in the autumn and winter than during the warm months of summer. The best season for its successful treatment is the summer, because there is less liability to relapse from taking fresh colds.

OZENA is only another name for a very bad form of chronic catarrh of the nose, occurring in an unhealthy constitution. When the health is injured and the vitality of the system is broken down, all local diseases are liable to assume an aggravated character. Not unfrequently ozena is produced by a vitiated state of the blood. From whatever cause it arises, it is a most serious affection, for if it be not arrested, it will assuredly go on to the destruction of the bones of the nose, and may end fatally.

We are your obedient servants,

R. & J. HUNTER.

NOTE.—Drs. Hunter and Ramsay, of the firm of Drs. R. & J. Hunter, of New York, have opened a *permanent* branch office in this city, at No. 1318 Chestnut street, where they can be consulted, either personally or by letter, upon all affections of the Throat, Heart, and Lungs, embracing Catarrh, Sore-Throat, Bronchitis, Asthma and Consumption. These gentlemen have been stimulated to act not only by the calm indifference with which general practitioners regard the terrible suffering and mortality attendant upon Throat and Lung Diseases, but also by the unparalleled success in both England and France, as well as in America, which has everywhere followed their *direct* and *local* treatment of Inhalation, as advocated and practiced by them.

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dec9-cowtf

HOLLOWAY'S PILLS.—HEARTBURN.—When overflow of bile occurs and the functions of the stomach become deranged, a burning sensation is felt in the region of the stomach, and is popularly termed *Heartburn*. Holloway's Pills, by their immediate action on the liver, purify its secretions, cleanse the solvent fluids, and expel all acrid, irritating matter from the stomach.
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oct14-3m

A WORD TO THE BOYS GOING SOUTH.

It would not be strange if, with the change of climate and exposure to which you will be exposed in the land of "Dixie," you should stand in need of some medicine to be used immediately; such a remedy is PERRY DAVIS' VEGETABLE PAIN KILLER. The Pain Killer has been tested in every variety of climate, and by almost every nation known to Americans. It is the almost constant friend of the missionary and the traveller on sea and land—for the cure of Colds, Coughs, Weak Stomach and General Debility, Indigestion, Cramp and Pain in the Stomach, Bowel Complaint, Colic, Diarrhea, Cholera, etc. Don't go without a bottle in your knapsacks. To be had at the Drug stores.—*Prescott Journal.*
dec2-2t

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OF

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sep30-3m

MARRIAGES.

☞ Marriage notices must always be accompanied by a responsible name.

On the 28th of Nov., by the Rev. Thos. Winter, D. D., GEORGE W. BLAKE, of this city, to ANNIE E., daughter of John Omensetter, Esq., of Roxborough.

On the 23d of Nov., by the Rev. John Thompson, Mr. ROBERT EWING, of Goshen, N. Y., to Miss MARY J. FIFE, of this city.

On the 23d of Nov., by the Rev. Wm. C. Robinson, Mr. JESSE RUSH to Miss MARY THOMAS, both of Montgomery county, Pa.

On the 10th of Sept., by the Rev. J. H. Alday, Mr. JOHN M. SCHIMPFF to Miss MARY A. WALLAVER, both of this city.

On the 31st of Oct., by the Rev. A. Manship, Mr. CHARLES W. WATSON to Miss SARAH A. PILLING, both of this city.

On the 24th of Nov., by the Rev. J. H. Kennard, Mr. JACOB H. LORIER to Miss ANNA WILT, both of this city.

DEATHS.

☞ Notices of Deaths must always be accompanied by a responsible name.

On the 28th of Nov., AJAX CONARD, in his 73d year.

On the 28th of Nov., DANIEL NEWMAN, in his 79th year.

On the 27th of Nov., GEORGE W. LOVE, aged 21 years.

On the 27th of Nov., CHARLES M. SEXTON, in his 23d year.

On the 27th of Nov., THOMAS KENNEDY, aged 33 years.

On the 26th of Nov., SUSAN M. HOFFMAN, in her 20th year.

On the 26th of Nov., JACOB LUKENS, in his 66th year.

On the 25th of Nov., JOSEPH A. HANCOCK, in his 52d year.

On the 25th of Nov., RICHARD GALLAGHER, aged 24 years.

On the 24th of Nov., Mrs. AMELIA M., wife of the Rev. D. W. Bartine, D. D.

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BLANKETS, SHEETINGS, DAMASKS, &c., &c.
mar18-1y

☞ A gentleman in Lowell, who uses his vest pocket as a receptacle for tobacco, filled his pipe one morning last week, from the stock on hand, and sauntered down the street. After going a short distance, his pipe was suddenly blown from his mouth in fragments, and his face and eyes burnt. It appeared that in the same pocket he had deposited a revolver charge, and, in a fit of absent-mindedness had put it into his pipe with the tobacco. His injuries, fortunately, were slight. One or more passers-by were also slightly injured by fragments of the pipe.

THE LADY'S FRIEND.

The DECEMBER number of this favorite magazine is a superb one. The leading steel engraving, in illustration of the text,

"Children's children are the crown of old men, And the glory of children are their fathers;"

is one that will go home to many hearts. The engraved title-page is truly beautiful—it is a gem of art. It represents The Past and The Future—while, around,

"The little birds sing East, and the little birds sing West,"

to use a well-known line from Mrs. Browning's beautiful "Rhyme of the Duchess May." The Double Colored Steel Fashion Plate for this number will be pronounced by the ladies "superb," or else we are very greatly mistaken. Then there are engravings of the new fashions in jackets, cloaks, embroidery, coiffures, bonnets, &c. The following is the

LIST OF CONTENTS.

STEEL PLATE—FRONTISPIECE.—The Past and The Future.
" " "Childrens's children are the crown of old men; and the glory of children are their fathers."
COLORED FASHION PLATE.
ILLUSTRATIONS:
Only a Child—Children's Fashions—Little Girls' Fashions—Ivy Wreath for Silk Embroidery—Talma—Paletot or Promenade Jacket—Spanish Jacket—Casaque with Hood.
MUSIC—Maud or Sallie?
ONLY A CHILD. By S. ANNIE FROST.
OVER SEA. By FLORENCE PERCY.
MY COURTSHIP.
THE LIGHT HOUSE. By J. C. T.
MY BEAUTIFUL SISTER. By LOUISA CHANDLER MOULTON.
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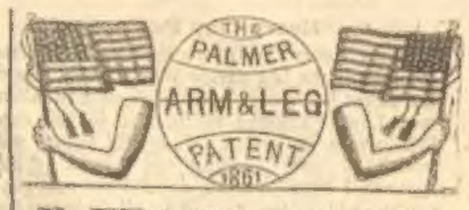

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WIT AND HUMOR.

Henry Clay Posed.

When Henry Clay was a young and brilliant member of the Legislature of Kentucky, one of the oldest Buckskins heard him quote the Common Law of England as decisive in the case then under discussion. The old fellow was astonished, and, jumping up, began: "Mr. Speaker, I want to know, sir, if what that gentleman said is true? Are we all living under the old English law?" The Speaker informed the anxious inquirer that the Common Law was recognized as a part of the law of the land. "Well, sir," resumed the Buckskin, "when I remember that our fathers, and some of us, fit, bled and died to be free from English law, I don't want to be under any on it any longer. And I make a motion that it be repealed right-away." The motion was seconded. The Kentucky blood was up. The Buckskins fired off speech after speech, and Mr. Clay had as much as he could do to explain the matter, and save the Legislature of Kentucky from repealing the Common Law of England.

Virtue its Own Reward.

The last joke at the expense of the French Society for the Protection of Animals, is to the following effect:—

A countryman, armed with an immense club, presents himself before the President of the Society, and claims the first prize. He is asked to describe the act of humanity on which he founds his claim. "I saved the life of a wolf," replies the countryman. "I might easily have killed him with this bludgeon," and he swings his weapon in the air, to the intense discomfort of the President. "But where was this wolf?" inquires the latter, "what had he done to you?" "He had just devoured my wife," is the reply. The President reflects an instant, and then says, "My friend, I am of the opinion that you have been sufficiently rewarded."

Going to Ramoth Gilead.

A sailor, who had served the king so long at sea that he almost forgot the usages of civilized society on shore, went one day into the church at his native town at Kirkaldy, in Fife, where it happened that the minister chose for his next the well-known passage, "Who will go up with us to Ramoth Gilead?" This emphatic appeal being read a second time, and in a still more impressive tone of voice, the thoughtless tar crammed a quid of tobacco into his cheek, rose up, put on his hat, then, looking around him, and seeing nobody moving, he exclaimed, "You cowardly lubbers! Will none of you go with the old gentleman? I'll go for one." So out he went, giving three cheers at the door, to the amazement of all present.

A VERY good joke is told of a gentleman who had risen in life, but whose education had been rather neglected. However, he was jolly, and loved a bit of fun as well as most people. Dining with a friend one evening, the servant, in bringing in a tongue, clumsily let it fall, upon which the good-humored host, instead of storming at the man, turned to his guests, and said quaintly: "That was a *lapsus linguæ*"—a speech which caused such laughter and merriment that the gentleman bore it in memory, and resolved to reproduce it at his own table. Whereupon he invited a party, and took care to give orders to John to let down the round of beef as he was entering the room—an order punctually obeyed. "That was a *lapsus linguæ*" said the host, but no laughter was evoked. "I say that was a *lapsus linguæ*," he repeated, but still without effect. At length, sadly put out by the non-success of his supposed witticism, he repeated the original story amid roars of laughter.

CHUNKS OF WISDOM BY JOSH BILLINGS.—Sailors heave the lead for the purpose ov finding the bottom, not for the purpose ov going there—it is sum so with advise; men should ask for it, not so mutch for the purpose ov following it, as for the purpose ov strengthening his own plans.

Enny boddy kan tell whare lightning struck last, but it takes a smart man tew find out whare it is a going tew strike next time—this is one ov the differences between larning and wisdom.

Most enny boddy can write poor sense, but thare aint but few that kan write good nonsense—and it almos takes an eddycated man tew appreciate it after it is writ.

VAT YOU CALE DEM?—"Vat you call dem tings vit long bills sat fly and make a noise, b-z-z-z?" said a Frenchman the other day. "Woodcock," we replied. "Eh bien! I kil six morning, before mine breakfast, twenty-five woodcock." "The deuce you did! Where did you find them?" "In mine chamber bed." "Twenty-five woodcock in your bed-chamber? You must mean musquitoes." "Eh bien! Zen I kill twenty-five musquitoes."

WHILE travelling with a friend between P——— and S———, we passed a neglected and dilapidated house, that in its better days had been used as an inn. Its crumbled appearance attracted our attention, and particularly an old sign upon which all that could now be read was "X Ale." "Do you know what became of the proprietor of that inn?" said my friend. "No," I answered, innocently. "He X Ale(d) too much," said he, "and kicked the bucket."

"DEAR me," said Mrs. Partington to Ike, the other day, as she was reading the paper, "what an excoriating circumstance, poor, dear man. I suppose it was wind on the stomach did it. Dr. Bellows bust." Ike at once seized the paper, and found the paragraph, so alarmingly headed, referred to a marble bust of the reverend gentleman on view at a statuary repository.

STAMPS.—An Irishman catching a thief's hand in his pocket in the post-office the other day, knocked the rascal down, and began to trample on his carcass, as if he was dancing a Fardowner's jig. "What's that for?" said a bystander. "Oh!" said Pat, "it's small change the fellow wanted, and faith, I'm after giving him a few post-office stamps!"

LORD PALMERSTON used to tell this anecdote of himself: "When I was a young man, the Duke of Wellington made an appointment with me at half-past seven in the morning, and some one asked me, 'Why, Palmerston, how will you keep that engagement?' 'Oh,' I said, 'of course the easiest thing in the world. I shall keep it the last thing before I go to bed.'"

A KEEN EYE FOR BUSINESS.

"Help a poor broken-down tradesman, Miss. My two last razors a bargain—her 'em both for a shilling."

AGRICULTURAL.

Cosmo's Column.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

CRANBERRY CULTURE.

Sixteen cents a quart for cranberries again. Thirteen dollars a barrel at wholesale; and after all the preaching and practice, and the five thousand and fifty cranberry plantations put in since 1860, a ready market, and rapid sale all over the country, and the demand still in excess of supply.

Depend upon it, farmers, everywhere, from Eastport to Alabama—Cape May to California—it will pay to put in a cranberry patch. Considering the value of the berry as an article of home consumption, it would pay every proprietor of five or five hundred acres, to put in a small cranberry plantation, though he should never send a berry to market. For pies, tarts, puddings, and everyday sauce, there is no fruit more palatable or wholesome—something sharp in their acidity it is true, the little blushing red fellows are. But then please remember—if the cranberry was naturally as sweet as a strawberry, it would be worthless. And then after all, we use only just so much sweetening as we do for peaches or pippins. Our wives *will* have "pound for pound." Never can coax them quite out of that practice.

Besides its culinary uses, the cranberry possesses medicinal qualities of an innocent but effective order, that ought to commend it and its culture to every family in the country. As a pleasant diuretic, its efficacy is unquestionable. In six cases out of every ten, we believe, a hard, sound, not too ripe cranberry, cut through the middle, and the cut side bound upon a tormenting corn, first paring it to the quick, the application to be made upon going to bed, and the practice continued for a week, will effectually cure the *acher* when all other means have failed.

An application of finely-mashed raw cranberries to indolent ulcers, old cuts that will not heal, and all gangrenous sores, is always cool and soothing—oftentimes almost magical in its effects. In the treatment of erysipelas, cranberries eaten in tarts, pies, or simply stewed, and cranberry plasters applied to the erupted surface, in the majority of instances will eradicate the disease from the system. As an alterative, antiscorbutic, and a most delightful spring and summer beverage, cranberryade is invaluable. With proper care and judicious management, the berry can be kept in good condition the year round.

Within a few years, there has obtained among culturists the mistaken notion that cranberries can be successfully grown on any upland that will produce corn or potatoes. This is an error that ought to be corrected. Cranberries will upon compulsion live out a few sickly years, and produce a minimum yield of indifferent fruit on upland situations. But to do what the cranberry can and will do if favored by proper position, the plant must have a low locality and other waterings than that bestowed by rains. At least eight farmers out of every ten, can hunt out somewhere on his domain, a little corner particularly adapted by Nature to the requisites of the plant; and this winter will be a capital time to prepare it properly.

We commend the following precepts cut from the *Maine Farmer*, than which there is no better authority in this world—to all who contemplate cultivating cranberries:

"1. The requisites of successful cranberry culture are air, light, and water. With these it will produce its fruit as well upon a bank of clear sand as upon a bed of rich muck. It must have moisture, either from brook or springs. The plant will not live in stagnant water.

"2. With a piece of moist, open soil, with water not more than six inches from the surface, cranberries can be raised to a limited extent. But to have just such a location as is desirable for their successful culture, select a piece of low-lying land with a sufficient fall to drain it enough to work it [without inconvenience, and with an opportunity to flood it, as occasion may require, to the depth of six or eight inches.

"3. Set the plants about the 25th of May, after having eradicated all grass and weeds from the spot selected. Distance three and a half feet apart between the rows, and eighteen inches between the hills. The distances apart, however, will depend somewhat upon the number of plants one wishes to set upon a given piece of land. At the above distance they admit of good cultivation; if set closer, the plants soon form a mat of thick covering, which keeps down the weeds.

"4. The cranberry is liable to be injured [by late spring frosts—while the vines are in blossom—usually from May 25 to June 4. A fly also attack the vines about the middle of July, depositing its eggs in the berry. The larvæ of this fly is very destructive to the cranberry. It is its very worst enemy.

"5. The use of flooding the vines, and the seasons for performing the operation are as follows:

"In Winter, to protect the ground from the severe action of the frost; in late spring, to check the growth of weeds and wild grasses; in July to prevent the cranberry fly from depositing its eggs in the berry. At each season the retarding effects of the water on the plants are very slight.

"The Bell, the Cherry, and the Bugle, so named from a slight resemblance in form to each article mentioned—are the varieties; the first two being especial favorites."

DRESSING UP FRUIT TREES.

During the winter—all through, from this time till the first of April, every day when you fancy there is nothing very particular for you to do, just take a walk out around and about your fruit trees—apples, peach, pear, cherry, and plum trees. The chances are you will discover a good many shabby, ragged—some very likely feeble and sickly looking fellows among them. It is a capital time to improve their appearance and condition.

Take those old veteran apple trees for instance. They have gone out of bearing mostly. No wonder. Look at the dead branches, great tufts of gray moss, and rough, ragged jackets half falling from their trunks. Then ask yourself honestly if you would willingly bear, or do anything else, if you could help it, under such treatment and utter neglect.

Dress up the old fellows—make them comfortable, and probably you will bring them back to usefulness. In any event you will vastly improve the appearance of things, and only expend time that else would have been wasted.

Begin with a sharp drawing-knife and high up in the tree among the larger branches. Shave downwards, and shave off carefully, all the old, outer bark—the dead, useless scarf skin of the trees—making limbs and trunk as clean and smooth as the body of a thrifty young poplar—taking care always not to shave off, or wound the soft, inner bark.

Having thus undressed as many trees as you can dress up again the same day, have ready a warm coat made of the juice of tobacco stems—pretty strong. To ten gallons of this, add four pounds of potash, three gallons of common soft soap, and then stir in slacked lime, until you have the mixture so thick that it can be laid on like paint. If you add a pound of lamp-black, you will have a good, dark, tree color—better than the objectionable *white-wash*.

With an ordinary whitewash brush, paint over the shaved trunk and branches thoroughly, affording them a warm, comfortable, winter coat, and all such bark lice and vermin as may have escaped the *shave*, a very uncomfortable one.

Mulch liberally all around the trees to a considerable distance with any sort of coarse litter, valueless for other purposes; dig or plough about the trees early in the spring, and if you do not succeed in inducing them to enlist for another bearing campaign, you will at least have done just what you ought to effect that desirable object.

CALIFORNIA DAIRY FARMS.

California leads the world in all "big" things. She has afforded the biggest trees, peaches, pears, pumpkins, piles of gold, and now shows up to the world the biggest dairy-farm upon its surface.

In 1858, we guess, there went out from small farms away up among the Green Mountains of Vermont, two farmers—O. L. and J. M. McShafter, and their neighbor, Mr. C. W. Howard, dropping down and spreading out on a California peninsula, jutting out into the sea, which under the old Mexican regime, was known as *Punta Reyt's Rancho*—King's Point Farm—situated some twenty-five miles north of San Francisco. That old-time King's Point Farm has been transformed by the Messrs. McShafters and Howard into the Queen Dairy Farm of the world.

The peninsula embraces an area of about seventy-one thousand acres of land, all of which is owned, occupied, and utilized by the three gentlemen named, as a dairy-farm, and for grazing purposes—40,000 acres of the domain being devoted to dairy purposes, the cows finding abundant pasturage ten months out of the twelve. Of the remaining 31,000 acres, 10,000 are given to sheep grazing, maintaining at the present time 8,000 wool-bearers the year round, without feeding or other care than herding at night. Then there are twenty-one thousand acres partially covered with timber, affording all the fuel and fencing material that will be required at the Queen Dairy Farm these hundred years to come.

These California dairymen are now erecting a cheese factory, that next spring will begin turning out cheeses from one thousand cows, while they will milk three thousand more for butter; their experience having proved that as good a quality of butter and as much per cow can be made on this Pacific peninsula as in the land of "Goshen."

Only think of it, milking 4,000 cows; in five years, perhaps, shearing 20,000 sheep; and then with all the dairymen, maids, machinery, horses, herdsmen, shepherds, dogs, poultry, presses, and——. Well, it takes California to turn out "big things."

RECEIPTS.

Original.

SHORT CAKE.

First—sift the flour—the amount depending upon the number to be fed. For half-a-dozen hearty eaters—say one and a half pounds of flour. Make a funnel of the middle of the pan or bowl of flour, pour into it a quart of sour milk—warmed, but not heated. Dissolve a table-spoonful of salt in a little water, stir it into a pint of rich, sweet cream, if you are in a cream country and have it in plenty. If not, use clean, fat drippings that has been cooked. *Never* put raw lard or butter into a short cake. Pour the shortning, warmed, into the funnel and stir the whole together until thoroughly incorporated in a very stiff batter. Then dissolve a dessert spoonful of refined saleratus in a few spoonsful of water, and stir it in until it pervades the entire mass equally.

Put the batter into well-greased pans, an inch thick; bake in a moderately hot oven thirty to forty minutes, and the result will be a genuine, good, old-fashioned Yankee short cake—a very good one, too. MADELINE.

BUCKWHEAT CAKES.

As the buckwheat season has set in again, and griddle cakes are still in favor, permit me to put in my protest against so much swallowing of sheet lead under the name of buckwheat cakes. It is just as easy to make a delicacy of buckwheat flour as to murder it into the flabby, sodden, gutta percha abominations half the people eat by compulsion, and cooks christen *buckwheat cakes*.

I make my cake supplies a regular serial, beginning with a clean crock, clean, tepid water, and a bag of buckwheat meal. Put into the crock, first, a quart of water in which a table-spoonful of salt has been dissolved. Stir in meal, gradually sifting it through the fingers as in making Indian hasty pudding. Having acquired a stiff batter, stir in as much fresh yeast as you would use for a loaf of bread; cover the crock close; lay some woolen cloth over it, and set it behind the stove to keep warm. If the crock is prepared thus half full, at nine o'clock in the evening, it will probably be risen full by the time you are ready to begin cooking cakes in the morning. If so, dissolve in a half pint of warm water, a teaspoonful of saleratus—stir down the batter vigorously, have the griddle hissing hot; keep it well greased; drop on only a large spoonful in a cake; fry to a bright brown on both sides, and—don't, in mercy to humanity, stack up the cake in butter and soak them through with melted grease, even though it does cost seventy-five cents a pound. It is a wicked waste of butter, and a worse one of buckwheat cakes. They should be served red hot—or *brown* hot, but never buttered until the consumer takes them in hand.

Leave always in the crock, say half a pint of the batter as the foundation for the ensuing batch to be stirred up and set by every night in the same manner. After the first batch no yeast is required, but don't forget the saleratus every morning. Once in about five days, empty, scald out, and thoroughly cleanse your crock, put back the reserve batter, and go on as usual.

MADELINE.

Selected.

DOUGH NUTS.—Take one pint of warm milk, cut into it one-fourth of a pound of butter; four eggs well beaten; one pound and a half of brown sugar. Stir the sugar into the eggs; grate half a nutmeg, add the rind of a lemon grated in. Mix these all together well; thicken this into a good soft batter with sifted flour; add a little flour; beat this well, then add a wine glass half full of good brewer's yeast. When quite light, have ready some boiling lard, and drop in the dough nuts. Fry a nice, light brown, put them into a colander while hot to drain; then sift sugar over them.

CORN-MEAL MUFFINS.—Three cups of corn-meal, one half cut of sifted wheat flour, three eggs well beaten, two large spoonfuls of butter, and one teaspoonful of soda dissolved in one pint of buttermilk, and a little salt. Beat these well together, pour into rings, and bake a nice brown in the oven.

RYE CAKE.—Three cups of rye-meal, three of corn-meal, a little salt, one small teaspoonful of soda dissolved in a cup of milk, a teaspoonful of grated nutmeg and ground cinnamon, mixed; then add as much milk as will make a thin batter; bake on the griddle. Serve hot.

POTATO CAKES.—Boil four potatoes, skin and peel them, mash smoothly, and beat in a spoonful of good, sweet lard; then pour in one pint of new milk; stir this well; add a very little salt, and as much flour as will make it the consistency of muffins—this is to drop from the spoon; then add two large spoonfuls of yeast. Set it to rise. Bake in rings in the oven. Serve hot.

CORN CAKES.—Two pounds of sifted meal; pour on this one pint of sour milk or cream; cut up one spoonful of good butter; beat three eggs, and stir in a little salt, with one teaspoonful of soda dissolved in a little milk. This must be very lightly beaten; then pour into tins, and bake quickly.

BUTTERMILK MUFFINS.—Stir into one quart of buttermilk one teaspoonful of soda, and into one quart of flour one teaspoonful of cream of tartar; add them, and beat them well together, and pour into the muffin rings, and bake on a griddle. Serve hot.

POTATO MUFFINS.—Boil three good-sized potatoes, skin and mash them, beat in a teaspoonful of salt, and a piece of good butter the size of an egg; make this perfectly smooth, and about the consistency of starch, by adding a little warm water; beat up two eggs, dissolve one teaspoonful of soda in a little water, with a teacup of yeast; then add three pints of sifted flour; mix these well together, and add one pint of milk-warm water; stir in the soda, and set it to rise over night for breakfast. Bake in rings on the griddle.

☞ "My boy, might I inquire where Merrix & Printz's drug-store is?" Urchin (very respectfully.)—"Certainly, sir." Old gent, (after waiting awhile.)—"Well, sir, where is it?" Urchin—"Haven't the least idea, your honor."

THE RIDDLER.

Holiday Enigma.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

My 42, 39, 19, 25, 41, is a nice present for a lady.
My 8, 16, 40, is a nice present for a gentleman.
My 13, 33, 24, is appreciated by children.
My 17, 36, 27, 18, 31, 37, 51, 43, is what little girls expect at Christmas.
My 2, 10, 7, 5, 44, 18, 7, 50, 23, 29, is an instrument which combines pleasure with instruction.
My 46, 3, 21, 11, 26, 52, is a nice gift to present to a housekeeper.
My 47, 1, 4, 23, is an acceptable present for the holidays.
My 38, 48, 7, 50, 9, 14, 32, 39, 33, 17, is carried on, more or less, during holidays.
My 30, 42, 13, 33, 9, 6, is a building or room which ought to be decorated between Christmas and New Years, in every instance.
My 34, 20, 31, 10, 45, 46, 28, is how all institutions ought to be at the beginning of the new year.
My 35, 21, is an exclamation which is repeatedly uttered on Christmas and New Year's morning.
My whole is my wish.
Newtown, Ham. Co., O. B. T.

Enigma.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

I am composed of 9 letters.
My 8, 2, 5, 6, is used by gunners.
My 9, 7, 6, is worn by gentlemen.
My 1, 6, 2, 3, 4, 5, is used for decorating walls.
My 4, 7, 6, is a domestic animal.
My 7, 8, 9, is a species of tea.
My whole is a delightful dish mentioned in Madeline's Kitchen Cabinet. EMILY.
Baltimore, Md.

Charade.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

My first the South gave to the North,
Scarce five short years ago,
To call her gallant armies forth,
And crush the reptile foe.

My second is a common term,
Used in the rural fields,
Tells you to "cut," in accent firm,
The hay their bounty yields.

My third a poet was, renowned,
Who died some years ago;
Or is a river which is found
Through Italy to flow.

My fourth when darkness ruled the deep,
And chaos sat profound,
Sprang from its everlasting sleep,
And kindled gladness round.

Again arrange my whole aright,
And then divide in twain;
Thus a Word and Name you bring to light,
With neither loss or gain.

My first, a writer prominent,
Contributes to THE POST;
My last, refined, is prominent
Among the polished host.

My whole is a citizen of the world.
Steele, Ind. JOHN C. OCHILTREE.

Double Rebus.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

A boy's name.
A state of the Union.
A girl's name.
An apartment of a house.
A river of Italy.
A large city of Europe.
A parent's nickname.
My initials and finals form two precious stones.
S. H. G.

Problem.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

From the shaft making 100 revolutions per minute, and with a pinion 16 inches in diameter at the *pitch* line, wishing to transmit motion at 30 revolutions per minute. Required, the diameter of the wheel at the *pitch* line.

JAS. M. GREENWOOD.
Paulville, Adair Co., Mo.
☞ An answer is requested.

Problem.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

Required the curve surface of a hyperboloid, whose altitude is 10, the transverse and conjugate axes of the generating hyperbola being 30 and 18? MORGAN STEVENS.
☞ An answer is requested.

Conundrums.

☞ When is a good tune most relished? Ans.—When it is opportune.

☞ When may two people be said to be half-witted? Ans.—When they have an understanding between them.

☞ LIKE A THOUSAND OF BRICKS.—Why are builders like rapid creepers? Ans.—Because they are fond of running up a house in a single week.

☞ A forty-day husband, on whom the memory of the honeymoon already seems to have become powerless, wants to know why his wife is like a small pie. Do you give it up? Ans.—"Because," says the unfeeling wretch, "she is *now a little tart*."

Answers to Last.

ENIGMA—Subscribe for the Saturday Evening Post. ENIGMA—Julius Cæsar. RIDDLE—The letter I. CHARADE—Rio Janeiro, (Rye, O, Jay, Nero.) CHARADE—Manchester, (Man, Chest, er.)

Answer to Morgan Stevens's Problem, published Sept. 30th, 41, 80 and 320 men. J. M. Greenwood, Morgan Stevens.

To Problem by Chal, same date, 55. J. N. Sodera, Morgan Stevens, and J. M. Greenwood.

To David Wickersham's, Oct. 7th. The arc is equal to the cotangent. Artemas Martin.